THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts, and Public Affairs.

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THE WORLD STEPS FORWARD

TWO things have been done within the past week which, if the hopes which can reasonably be based upon them are not delusions, may rivet the attention of history upon the early days of 1929. Both are followed, however, with gigantic "ifs"; and there is no way around these excepting the route of good-will and sound intelligence. By signing the Kellogg-Briand treaty, the United States has definitely entered the international drama. To most of us this may look a little abstract, may seem a kind of game for putting the ends of the earth together on paper. Nevertheless it has a direct bearing upon the life of every man. Here is to be found the explanation for more than heart-break and tears, drained so unsparingly from preceding generations. International action, or lack of it, now controls markets and morals, jobs and culture. But what it is to accomplish is no longer, as Professor Shotwell says, "a moral issue, but almost wholly a matter of ways and means, examined cautiously but fairly, in the light of the ultimate purpose to be attained."

Neither the United States nor any other nation can settle back into inactivity, therefore. There must be unceasing response to the public will for advancement of understanding; and no one must mind if, for the moment, a little of custom or leisure or independence are sacrificed for the attainment of the larger advantage. We see in particular the possible efficacy of the press. Charles Péguy once declared sardonically that the journalist's attitude was "to say a little about foreign policy, out of a kind of international politeness." The guiding principle of "modern international effort" was, he thought, "that it is a hundred times better to deal badly with the subject that not to deal with it at all." The practical, the real, must be sought out and advocated. The vaguely dithyrambic, the emotional politics—which hamper what Professor Shotwell calls for, and feed men on pretense—need opposition and criticism.

That the moral urge to act justly and charitably must also be encouraged is, of course, the plainest platitude. And one can think of nothing that would be more helpful here than the influence of the Church, not merely upon the souls of individuals but upon

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society itself, which has its own entity and governance. If the settlement of the Roman question, which very recent news has termed so far advanced, can really be effected, who will doubt that the Church's international effort will become far easier and more fruitful? The details as outlined seem quite satisfactory. Italy concedes what the four last Popes have demanded—not the old papal states, but an independent and serviceable territory; not a sum of money which might tax the Italian people heavily, but still an indemnity in some measure commensurate with the losses sustained. It has long since been evident that Rome, once a city among independent Italian states, cannot be separated from a united Italy. The independence of the Papacy, however, is at least as important as the solidarity of Italy. Wearing no diplomatic or political shackles, the Holy See can gather round it representatives of all peoples to whom its efficacy and courage are priceless aids. The faith of our fathers, once more universal in outward appearance as well as in inner reality, will not fail to encourage the universality of charity and respect for rights.

Yet here, too, the issue hangs in the balance. One can only pray that reasonableness and desire for human betterment will prevail. But in carrying the matter so far ahead mankind has bravely stepped forward. It remains to be seen whether it will cling to the road or go astray. To a not inconsiderable extent this depends, it seems to us, upon the public will—not merely a knowledge of the matter but a fierce desire for the triumph of the right.

WEEK BY WEEK

THE weeks that President-elect Hoover passed in Washington again showed him in the rôle of enigmatic listener. Such readiness to hear every comer was probably flattering and useful to those bent on making specious pleas for place and position. Yet at the same time it must have been rather disconcerting, for doubt as to the reception of one's argumentative presentation has a chilling effect on earnestness. The endless train that passed through the Hoover office had most to say on the question of Cabinet appointments. Mr. Hoover displayed more patience with this class than he need have. To hear recommendations and constructive suggestions is praiseworthy, but to give ear to violent opposition and destructive opinions of possible appointees is a burden under which no President-elect should be required to work. We have too great a regard for Mr. Hoover's fairness, too much faith in his declaration that the affairs of the country will be placed in the hands of those men best qualified to approximate ideal efficiency and honesty, to believe that he will be swayed by the numerous lobbying organizations which are so intent on securing favors for those most certain to smile on their particular aims. The unfortunate aspect of the affair is that, heard with attendant publicity, these forces will be inclined to take credit for an appointment, or a non-appointment, with which they actually had nothing to do.

Mr. Hoover Holds Audience

WITHOUT any clear-cut statement, Mr. Hoover has settled the question of a special session, and the Seventy-first Congress can discuss measures now before it with as much certainty as generally surrounds such matters that the extraordinary session will be convoked in mid-April. Of course the agenda of the sitting have become characteristically muddled. Mr. Longworth, never too keen an advocate of the special session, is convinced that farm relief and the tariff should constitute the entire business before the Congress. For him, as well as for many other Republican leaders, the special session is a necessary evil and the sooner the disagreeable dose is swallowed the better. Nevertheless it would be short-sighted for the Seventy-second Congress to assemble in the spring with the idea that it must solve the farmers' problems willy-nilly so that legislators may escape the oppressiveness of a Washington summer. Again, their fears of the introduction of legislation that is not pressing should disappear before a confidence in the new President's leadership.

Spain Looks for Men

HOW to develop her colonies in North and West Africa has been a subject of the greatest interest in Spain ever since the capture of Abd-el-Krim put an end to the engrossing Riff business. The difficulty of developing a proper source of man-power led the authorities concerned to linger on the possibilities in the old scheme of contract labor which has done so much in the past for the cultivation of primitive places, California and Hawaii coming forcibly to mind in this connection. China was the logical recruiting ground, but the nationalist government frowned upon the proposal to establish an agency in Pekin. Such paternalism is not extended the coolies in the Japanese-controlled province of Shantung, however, and the agents have been carrying out their assignment in that district without embarrassment. All of which puts the Chinese Weekly Review, so solicitous in these matters for the welfare of our yellow brethren, into a fine fury and makes it exclaim, with entire justice: "Thus is Chinese officialdom flouted in the Japanese-controlled area!"

Catholics in England

WHAT is the status of the Church in Britain? The figures supplied by the Catholic Directory for 1929 furnish information that, in some respects at least, constitutes an answer. During the year before last, 12,065 converts were added to the register of the faithful, which indicates a slight increase over previous accessions. The number of churches, chapels and priests has likewise grown,

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though not very noticeably. Since Catholics form about one-nineteenth of the total population, one must conclude that growth is virtually at a standstill. This is certainly not due to a lack of missionary fervor, because a whole series of admirable forces—from the Evidence Guild to the current literary crusade—have been set in motion. In all likelihood, one important factor is the position of the Established Church. When people cease to be interested in it, they very generally stop concerning themselves with religion in any form. And while history remembers the vast throng which used Anglicanism as a "half-way house" to Rome, it mentions comparatively few agnostics who went the whole distance for themselves. Today the Catholic Church in England confronts an agnostic environment and so an especially difficult task. But though it be hard, it is necessary; and the ardor of the British faithful is not abating.

THE elements in the Democratic party which have contemplated war on the Smith forces would do well to consider the spontaneous and immediate response made to the ex-Governor's radio appeal for small contributions toward the elimination of the party's campaign debts. Aside from their devotion to Democratic principles, the numerous contributors display their recognition of their party's recent candidate as a leader and a reconstructor. Mr. Smith was particularly careful in his radio address to make no assertions of intention to waive the titular leadership of his party. Yet he stressed the fact that he is above all a Democrat, and that his solicitude for the party is that of any member of the rank and file. The principle that the clearance of financial burdens should rest on the many, not the few, is part and parcel of his repeated declarations that the people themselves should take an active part in all governmental and elective affairs. Those critics who read into his offer of his bound campaign speeches an evidence of his egotism, and those interpreters who see in his appeal for funds the relegation of the Democratic National Chairman to a minor place in the party councils, are uninformed. Deplorable as it may be, the machinery of party organization absolutely requires to be well oiled with money. The comparative poverty of the Democratic party has always constituted one of the greatest of all obstacles to that party's success at the polls.

Democracy Solvent Again

PUBLISHED simultaneously with Senate discussion of international policy, Professor James T. Shotwell's War as an Instrument of National Policy ought to have a considerable influence upon the minds of those now teaching political science. It is a comprehensive and fully documented review of what followed the Briand offer to negotiate an anti-war treaty with the United States. The real value of the book lies, however, in the light it throws upon public opinion as an instrument of conciliation. It will be remembered that the Briand offer went unnoticed until President Butler focused attention upon it in a letter written to the New York Times. Almost immediately, private and public comment here and abroad insisted upon governmental action with so much force that all obstacles were borne down. "It is the opinion of those who watched it develop," says Professor Shotwell, "that the rising tide of public opinion is directly responsible for the negotiations which led to the Pact of Paris." Underneath this phenomenon one must, of course, recognize the influence of teachers and speakers who (however little any one of them may seem to accomplish) have, step by step, focused popular attention upon the philosophy of government. Though opinion is still inchoate and diffuse, its actual enormous possibilities have now been fully revealed.

Professor Shotwell's Book

ANYONE who relishes travel need not be told that the most delightful moments of a voyage are the discoveries of little doors that suddenly open upon long vistas of the past. You come to a small fountain over which a king and queen once quarreled, with the result that Her Majesty splashed water into the royal consort's face; and forms and shapes cluster round the insignificant stones, wonderfully amusing and instructive. Few writers have done more to promote this kind of enjoyment than M. Etienne Dupont, whose recent death ended a long period of research into the curiosities of Mont-Saint-Michel and the country round about. Though he was a jurist and judge, M. Dupont knew the ins and outs of the celebrated and romantic characters who had been identified with St. Malo and the mighty towers which surmount it; had investigated the maritime history of the district and found it rich in incident and suggestion; and had unearthed much precious information concerning the religious life of the people. France is the only country which produces just this type of delver; and certainly it owes them an extraordinary sum for the pleasure which they afford, and for the good which they enshrine for remembrance by their patient and loving labor.

An Antiquarian Passes

CANADA sends us a new magazine, somehow unexpected and having the feel of remoteness. There is much good stuff in the first issues of the Canadian Mercury, but it consorts poorly with the universe of Northwest Mounties and pioneering Chapdelaines to which we have grown so accustomed. Indeed, the average lumberjack would doubtless resort to profanity if asked to consider what Professor Leacock says about "national literature" or what Professor Humphrey thinks of Freud. Many of our Mercurians, however, are not savants, but young folk who

Literature in Canada

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take literature very seriously. It is pleasant to note that one contributor is described as "a young Montreal business man with musical interests," and that another "has been a moving spirit in amateur theatricals." Such touches make one feel at home immediately. Other notes are less agreeable. When one reads Dr. Hickson's remark that Bertrand Russell is "the most eminent philosopher today in the English-speaking world," it is difficult to restrain the feeling that provincialism has gone and done it again. Of that sentence and its English Mr. Russell would be quite incapable. Perhaps the Canadian Mercury is destined to be a tonic, a corrective, for the civilization it serves. The dominion cannot vote for Tolstoy any more than the United States can vote for Tolstoy. Having an excellent educational system and a virile population, it must go on to acquire easy contacts with the world's mind. We shall therefore watch the present literary experiment with deep interest and sympathy, hoping meanwhile for the best.

THE concert of the Paulist Choristers at the Metropolitan Opera House earlier this week was a notable occasion. Twenty-five years have passed since Pius X issued the encyclical on sacred music which led to their formation, and although the personnel has been constantly changing because of the very nature of the organization, more has been accomplished in that time than a sanguine sponsor could have hoped for. The choir has enjoyed an international reputation, its tours of two continents and its appearances at home have received the most enthusiastic critical acclaim, and it has given its best toward the furtherance of various patriotic and charitable causes. Very often a silver jubilee not only commemorates an origin, but marks an end to the best days of such an organization. That this is not the case with the Paulist Choristers, however, was evident in their recent concert. The Commonweal wishes at this time to join with the many who are extending their congratulations to Father Finn for his sustained and distinguished effort, and to the organization which has reflected that effort with such satisfactory success.

The Choristers Triumphant

WHATEVER its other shortcomings, the motor age has brought to general realization the tremendous value of our public parks. States as well as the national government have grown aware that in the beauties of mountains and woodlands and all the regions where nature has worked her marvels lie assets that must be jealously preserved. So basically sound is this policy that it is strange that there should be any dispute in vesting complete ownership in public agencies. Yet the bill to enable the federal government to acquire, by purchase or condemnation, all privately held lands within the national parks has met with opposition in the Senate. The havoc that the lumber companies which own lands within Yosemite National Park might wreak on that lovely preserve is a thought which should stampede every legislator to the bill's support. Owners of grounds for camps, such as Senator Thomas Walsh of Montana possesses in Glacier National Park, seek special consideration, but in selling to the government they are adopting the only unselfish course. Despite government ownership they could, by leasing, still enjoy their camps if they are constructed with a view to preserving scenic beauty. The government also proposes to continue the grant of camp sites under special permits and restrictions. Even this concession should be abandoned in time. Too many of our parks, notably those near a large week-ending population, are seriously disfigured by the unlovely and impermanent structures which masquerade under the name of "bungalows."

Private Lands in Public Parks

EXECUTIVES and committeemen of District 7, United Mine Workers of America, arrived at several important decisions in their meeting at Hazleton last week, but none which will have more far-reaching effect than that reserving for the district office the right to call a strike which has heretofore rested in the local unions. The history of organized labor in this country is evidence enough that the more such power is divided the more likely it is to be abused, and every abuse of it alienates public sympathy, the strongest support which labor in an emergency can depend upon. Men with a grievance cannot help but lose perspective on the merits of their case, and if they cannot act at such times without consulting the combined opinion of their fellow-workers, they are at least in sympathetic hands. That the Hazleton decision will strengthen the organization in District 7 is certain.

Good News for the Miners

MEMBERS of the legal profession, who should be most active in adapting the administration of law to changing and changed conditions, have traditionally been inclined to satisfaction with the status quo. Recently lay criticism of the law's delays has reached a point where it cannot wisely be disregarded. Recognition of these facts was made in the annual address by its president, William C. Breed, to the New York State Bar Association at its fifty-second annual meeting. "It is up to a modern and educated bar, and not to laymen," he declared in drawing a conclusion from these premises, "to see that the machinery for the ascertainment of justice and the methods of promptly obtaining it are not cumbersome or antiquated, but are adapted to the needs and the demands of the present age." We are happy to note that his advocacy of measures to determine where and how legal procedure breaks down, and to effect remedies for the situation, met with unani-

Anticipating Lay Action

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mous support. A resolution was formulated authorizing the executive committee of the Association to establish a bureau for a survey looking toward better administration of justice in the state. This bureau is designed to handle complaints by both laymen and lawyers against legal delays and other evils. Praiseworthy as this is, it is, naturally, only a first step. It must be followed by definite proposals and adoptions both in New York state and throughout the country. The beginning is auspicious.

A NOTABLE occasion was the recent opening at Wurzburg of a new building to house the first Medical Mission Institute ever to be established. Since 1922 this Institute has been open to Catholic men and women students of medicine, its special purpose being to train those who wish to consecrate themselves to medical work in the missionary fields. But it has been greatly hampered by cramped quarters, and the freedom and independence which it now gains will give it the opportunity to show what splendid work it is capable of doing. The need for competent medical attendants at the missions is much greater than is generally supposed, and only those who are in close touch with the situation in China, India and Africa will fully appreciate the importance of the expansion of the Institute at Wurzburg. In this country the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, with headquarters at Washington, is doing much to arouse interest in the training of doctors and nurses. Some day, through the help of friends, the Society may be enabled to establish here an institute similar to that in Wurzburg. May it be soon.

Missionary Physicians

THE tenth annual convention of the Newman Clubs held in New York City a few weeks ago focused attention upon the admirable and necessary work which these organizations perform in the secular colleges throughout the land. The addresses by the Reverend Francis P. Duffy and the Reverend Q. F. Beckley, O.P., Catholic chaplain at Princeton University, stressed the increasing importance of the intelligent study of religious problems, particularly as they apply to everyday life. Numerous throughout the East and in certain populous sections in other districts, the Newman Clubs are as yet all but an unknown quantity in many collegiate centres where this very circumstance can, perhaps, best define the almost limitless good which they might perform. This is particularly true, of course, of those places where Catholics are scarce, and where the means of enjoying the full benefits of the practice of their faith are correspondingly scarce. The good proceeding from a Newman Club affects not only those students who themselves become members of it, but the entire college community, which finds itself thereby placed in contact with the best in Catholic thought.

Newman Clubs

ANY last, lingering doubts as to Mr. Mellon's quality as a debater must have been removed when he answered the prohibitionist squad which detailed itself to harass him for his opposition to the proposed appropriation of an additional $25,000,000 for dry enforcement. He left them no chance for further objection, pointing out that the "Harris amendment makes the additional funds available to the prohibition bureau only"; that it provides too large a sum for one official to play with at his "unlimited discretion"; that it could not be used where it is sorely needed, in the customs service, border patrol and coast guard; and finally (what a triumph!) that it could not even be used for the educational purposes which are so dear to the drys, and which they had in mind in advocating the proposal. After this it ought to be clear enough that what most concerns Secretary Mellon is not the size of the appropriation but the probable inefficiency of its application. Of course it would not have been in character with his political discretion to have answered that it is too much money, anyway, to be spending in a vain and empty cause just when a new Republican administration undertakes to banish poverty from our midst. That is for others, among whom we count ourselves, to say, though we do not agree with those who insist that no amount of money, however applied, would avail to enforce prohibition. However, the minutiae of the feasible plan have not yet been formulated. The mixture of apathy and amusement which greeted Major Mills's receipt of the Durant prize is perhaps sufficient evidence that even experts (for surely that is not an over-description of the qualifications of the former dry chief of this district) are not infallibly guided in their meditations on this vexatious matter. Secretary Mellon has done well in discouraging the appropriation.

Mr. Mellon and the Drys

THE BOY AT WORK

IT IS very delightful to note the surprise with which the Albany correspondent of the truly excellent Christian Science Monitor greets the report of the State Education Department on working boys. Forty-four percent of 75,000 boys have held but one job since leaving full-time school, and 29 percent have held but two. "This working boy sticks to his job and is not given to idleness, according to the survey," gravely writes the correspondent.

It needed no survey to inform the world that the boy sticks to his job. He has been doing just that—on the farms, in the shops, and even on the battlefields, for a very long time. He is serious and intent; he has the "feeling of immortality" which Hazlitt described. He is likely to look on himself and his job as focal points around which the universe revolves. No need to look for another. He irks us often, and sometimes impresses us as being irresponsible because

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he will go about his tasks in his own way, and thinks whole-mindedly about that part of his employer's business in which he is most interested, rather than about the welfare of the concern. That is why the lad running errands for a radio shop will often give you more assistance in your receiving problems than the expert who has just left the house; or the apprentice keeping night watch in your garage will eliminate the annoyance which has sent you to the troubleman again and again. The satisfaction of small triumphs in his special interest is more, for the present, than salary or title; as a matter of fact he is one of the few idealists left in the world. He sticks to his last, his desk, his little corner in the shipping room, because he is lost to his surroundings, engrossed in dramatizing whatever problems are presented to him, and no one has as yet told him, or convinced him, that it is not important drama.

It is later, when the need for "getting ahead" is impressed on him, that he becomes hard to satisfy, and the youth who has held one job between the ages of sixteen and twenty may hold a dozen or more in the next decade of his life. He is not nearly so sure of himself as he was; and this unsureness reflects itself often in a constant search for "the right thing." When he was younger "the right thing" did not matter so much; it was enough to make the best of what one had.

Of course, many other things enter into the case of the young man who goes from job to job: the bewildering shock of the realization that time is short and that he must move rapidly if he is to "find himself"; the resentment, however unreasonable, at being discounted for his youth; but most of all, the discovery that his elders so seldom practise the ideals which they talk about and to which the young are such eager listeners. In some cases change becomes a habit from which a man cannot shake himself, and he is known as a "boomer" to the end of his days. More usually he settles down when nearing thirty, not always because he is in more congenial work than at twenty, but because discouraging experience has taught him that it is the thing to do, and because he has accepted responsibilities to the hearth. His search has taught him nothing but what he knew at seventeen: that most of us can only make the best of whatever position we are in, be it that of errand boy.

We should like to see a survey made of men in this period of life. How many have changed their jobs because they heard repeated, time and again, that depressing gospel which is expressed by the slogans of "Get Ahead," "Find Yourself," "Find the Right Thing"? How many because they thought to discover, somewhere else, the application of a code of ethics, a living up to high ideals? What of the compromises that would not be accepted by men who were still independent, and free to move with the wind? Here is a chance for a survey on which the correspondent of the Monitor might deliberate for columns.

THE ORATOR FOR CHIVALRY

ENGLISH letters have traditionally been endowed with religious reverence. A glance at almost any prose anthology will show that, excepting for one or two interludes, the "things of faith" governed the very rhythm of speech until Ruskin's death. The most important of the interludes is the eighteenth century, when rationalism turned into satire and satire into sentimentality. Almost immediately, however, one thinks of the great exceptions—Dr. Johnson and Edmund Burke. In both a definite nostalgia for eternal light prevailed; and so the present year, which marks the two hundredth anniversary of Edmund Burke, necessarily calls to mind a great figure to whom religious conviction was always something better than even the calm use of reflective reason.

How strange that the schoolboy, puzzled by Burke's discussion of political expediencies or principles, should never hear of these other things! Indeed one doubts if the great orator, obliged to tack between the Whig gospel of Adam Smith and the munificent reformatory codex of Plato, ever visualized, from a sociological point of view, that notion of an illuminated and generous public opinion which all that is best in modern times has struggled to make real. He remains, of course, an eloquent commentator on political wisdom —the only man of his time who believed that statesmanship should harmonize all the vital realities of humankind. Yet it is doubtful if the schoolboy perceives the wisdom while increasing his knowledge of the ways of political caution.

But do we not see a vaster, a nobler, Burke in those sentences anent the French Revolution which announce the reaction of a genuine romantic outlook against the diverse pseudo-romanticisms of chaotic dreamers? He did not understand the revolution. Experience shut off from his view that intense if narrow hunger for civic virtue which armed the men of France against a social order rotted by luxury and scorn. But he was surely right in his warning: "The age of chivalry is gone!" It was not a question of changing customs or forms but of abandoned flags. There were things which a gentleman or a true soldier would not do—which were conceivable only to camp scullions and caitiffs. And if society abandoned the disciplines and hopes which developed the first, it would inevitably become a stamping-ground for the second. And of course all that was wise and luminous in the romantic movement was really a hunger for the old standards, a wistful and melancholy dream of stalwart resurrected captains.

Obviously one reason why Burke could be so right and tolerant was because he happened to be genuinely Irish. This implies no racial superiority nor any equivalent nonsense. It means simply that in Burke's time it was necessary to be something akin to an Irishman in order to avoid being bowled over by fashionable cultural heresies. And so one welcomes the fine

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tribute which Mr. Bolton Waller has contributed to a recent number of the Irish Statesman. "Irish Burke was to the backbone," one reads. "Indeed he ought not even to be labeled 'Anglo-Irish,' since it would seem there was no English blood in his family. Throughout his life he suffered obloquy for being Irish. He was denounced by English politicians as an adventurer, an alien, a Jesuit spy. His brogue, his family, those fellow-countrymen in trouble to whom his house was a refuge, were all made use of in attacks upon him. If any of Ireland's distinguished exiles, from Columba downward, are to be reckoned Irishmen, Burke's claim must stand with the best, both for what he accomplished and for what manner of man he was."

STUDYING THE GOSPELS

ALMOST every Monday one reads that someone or other has declared that "we need a new conception of God." Obviously the remark is correct if it means that one's realization of Him needs to be constantly new, forever startlingly fresh. It must be awareness of His presence, not memory of something learned years ago. Too frequently, however, the phrase means that criticism of the objective content of Christianity necessitates a different conception of man's relationship with the Divine than has prevailed in the past. It would be difficult, indeed, to overestimate the effect of "criticism" upon the modern man's idea of the Christian scheme. Popular thinking has just caught up with the scholarly advance guard of thirty years ago. The vogue of such books as Emil Ludwig's recent production illustrates the advantage which a shrewd litterateur can take of emancipated public curiosity.

Germany, which was once the fountain-head of the "higher criticism" (though it is erroneous to assert that this criticism began in Germany) is now especially cursed with rationalistic vulgarizations. There are several recent books which make Herr Ludwig's tome seem very pious. Nevertheless, the phenomenon is quite general and establishes the necessity for clear and satisfactory discussion of the problems involved. This is eminently desirable from the Catholic point of view, because the attitude of leading scholars now appears to be repudiation of the "dazzling theories" of the older emancipators.

Toward satisfying this desire modern French writers are making a distinct contribution. One notices, first of all, the appearance of handbooks which provide reliable information regarding various aspects of the Christian sources. The Bibliothèque des Sciences Religieuses, a series of admirable little books published by the Librairie Bloud et Gay, included two recent publications: Monsignor Legendre's résumé of Scriptural geography, and Father Lemonnyer's analysis of New Testament theology. These place at the disposal of the layman a fund of easily digested information; and one feels that they should be utilized, together with similar work, by all who give instruction in Christian history or doctrine. The knowledge here outlined will help to increase and strengthen faith. Just how it supplements meagre comprehension of the Gospel story may be learned from reading the exceptionally fascinating Who, Then, Is This Man? —a life of Christ translated by Henry Longan Stuart, whose loss we regret so deeply, from the French of M. Marnas.

The drift of scholarship is, however, a different matter, harder to estimate. To what extent the traditional views are being restored may be judged from a brief outline of a recent critique in which Monsignor Pierre Batiffol discussed, for the readers of Le Correspondant, three important publications. Examination of the Gospels has been, to a considerable extent, analysis of texts; and to this M. Aimé Puech devoted a considerable portion of his history of Greek Christian literature. M. Puech is professor of Greek poetry in the University of Paris, and enjoys an international reputation as a Hellenist. The conclusions at which he arrives include the following: repudiation of the "Christ mythology" theory, which began with Drews, as an utterly untenable fantasy; acceptance of the view that Christianity developed very rapidly, so that the theory of its growth out of "influences" latent in the time must explain how these could accomplish so much in the brief space of twenty-five years; and insistence upon dates of Gospel authorship far earlier than those advanced by critics. M. Puech likewise argues for the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel.

By comparison with this work of a non-Catholic humanist, the publications of outstanding Catholic scholars are, of course, more apologetic in character. Nevertheless they conserve a mastery of critical knowledge and a sureness of touch which merit full confidence, even from those who do not share their faith. The Jesus-Christ, by P. De Grandmaison, whose recent death robbed the Society of Jesus of one of its foremost minds, is both a splendid summary of extant knowledge of Gospel history and a luminous mise-au-point of controversies. It is certainly the most important book on the subject from a Catholic point of view to have been published since Huby's Christus. In several respects it is admirably complemented by the exposition of the Gospels to which P. Lagrange, foremost of the French Dominican Biblists, has devoted so much energy. Outfitted with these two books, a modern apologist will know where he stands.

That investigation of Christian origins has not yet been completed is obvious; but one can assert without fear that the directions which criticism is now pursuing are utterly different from those which Strauss and Renan preferred. This fact ought to be set forth fully and competently, lest the prevailing vulgarization weaken the confidence of many who are helpless in the face of assertions which bear the stamp of learning and popularity.

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PROPHETS AND BITTER-ENDERS

By WILLIAM C. MURPHY, JR.

MR. KELLOGG'S multilateral treaty for the renunciation of war having been ratified by the Senate, with practical unanimity, nothing remains to be done about the matter save to satisfy a permissible curiosity as to what the treaty means. What more competent evidence could be adduced on this question than the statements of senators who, after prolonged debate and, presumably, serious consideration, voted without reservations for the ratification of the treaty?

The vote in the Senate—eighty-five to one—in favor of ratification might reasonably be construed as an indication that there was an almost perfect union of opinion in that august body. There was, to the extent that every senator who voted, except Senator Blaine of Wisconsin, was in favor of ratification. But why did the various senators favor the treaty? Anyone who has given heed to their divergent explanations must have been reminded of the famous occasion upon which seven blind men examined an elephant. All agreed that there was an elephant but, since each of the unfortunates had made a tactual examination of a different portion of the pachyderm's anatomy, there were some differences of opinion as to its appearance.

So it happened that those whose preferences or business obligations placed them in the Senate galleries during the ratification debate heard Senator Bruce of Maryland denounce the treaty in unmeasured terms and then announce that he would vote for its ratification because, in his opinion, it is a stepping stone toward American membership in the League of Nations. This latter implication was denounced roundly by Senator Borah, an ardent advocate of the treaty and one of the famous group of bitter-enders who defeated the treaty of Versailles. Then came Senator Brookhart of Iowa, who consumed an afternoon telling the Senate that he was in favor of the treaty because, in his opinion, its ratification is tantamount to recognition of the Soviet government of Russia, the only government in the world which had ratified the treaty before the United States. Once more Senator Borah who, as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, was in charge of the treaty on the floor, was forced to enter a denial; and that notwithstanding Borah's long battle to bring about recognition of the Soviet régime.

On the very day on which the treaty was ratified, when senators were "*in articulo mortis*," so to speak—a record vote being a life and death matter in the Senate—there were still some divergencies of opinion as to the meaning of the treaty.

One interpretation was that expressed by Senator Walsh of Montana, one of the great lawyers in the Senate. He took to task those who had suggested that the treaty was nothing but a "feeble gesture." Senator Walsh said:

> To my mind it is vastly more than a gesture. It is, in my estimation, a revolutionary pronouncement reversing the position that war has hitherto occupied in the domain of international law. Heretofore war has been regarded in international law as a perfectly legitimate means by which a nation might advance its interests or its policies. Whatever might be thought of the nation that precipitated hostilities, and however unprovoked might be its attack upon another country, it violated no law. It acted entirely within its sovereign right in doing so. It offended against no nation except the one assailed. If the treaty should be in force, it would be an outlaw in pursuing such a course. It would offend against every nation signatory to the treaty, comprising, as it is expected, practically every civilized nation. It would become a lawbreaker and guilty of an international crime.

Senator Walsh's view was reinforced from an antipodal plane in the following paean by Senator Heflin of Alabama:

> I rejoice that the time has come in the history of the world when war is being outlawed, when the intelligent, upstanding nations are frowning upon war, when they are all turning their attention to the halls of peace and seeking to have their difficulties and their disagreements settled there and not upon the fields of carnage.

But Senator Glass, Secretary of the Treasury under Woodrow Wilson, was not so sure of the value of the Kellogg treaty. The Virginia Senator said:

> I intend to vote for the peace pact, but I am not willing that anybody in Virginia shall think that I am simple enough to suppose that it is worth a postage stamp in the direction of accomplishing permanent international peace. I think we are about to renounce something as a national policy which no nation on earth for 150 years has ever proclaimed as a national policy. . . . But I am going to be simple enough, along with the balance of you, to vote for the ratification of this worthless but perfectly harmless peace treaty.

Senator Johnson of California, who in bygone days was a member of Borah's battalion of death against the League of Nations, was compelled to resort to poetry to express his appreciation of the treaty for which he voted a few minutes later:

> I remember long ago reading Justin McCarthy's If I Were King, and seeing Sothern in his inimitable fashion portraying the character of François Villon. I remember certain words that were attributed by Mr. McCarthy to Villon. I dedicate those words to this treaty. Villon said:

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"To Messire Noel, named the neat
By those who love him, I bequeath
A helmless ship, a houseless street,
A wordless book, a swordless sheath,
An hourless clock, a leafless wreath,
A bed sans sheet, a board sans meat,
A bell sans tongue, a saw sans teeth,
To make his nothingness complete."

The gibes of Glass and Johnson aroused Senator Borah to make a brief impromptu defense of the treaty which was, in reality, a far better speech than he had made in his more studied and prolonged efforts when the matter first came before the Senate:

> When we come to analyze this treaty, and to consider what the treaty is and what is behind it, and compare it with what is in other treaties for peace and what is behind other treaties, why should this treaty be considered as impractical or as an ideal beyond the power of men and women to attain? Why should a treaty renouncing war and pledging nations to the settlement of their controversies through pacific means be regarded as without value? Is the obligation in this treaty any less binding than the obligation in any other treaty? Is the honor or the good faith of the nations signatory to this treaty any less binding than the honor and the good faith of the nations signatory to any other treaty? . . . We may talk about treaties providing for war and providing for the use of armies and navies, and for economic boycotts, but there is at last nothing behind any of those treaties except the honor and the good faith of the nations signing them. There is just the same honor, the same binding obligation and the same good faith behind an agreement not to go to war under any circumstances, that there is behind an agreement to go to war under certain circumstances. . . . I say that the most searching, universal and profound passion in the human breast today is the passion for peace, and if it is organized and directed as we organize and direct the passion for war, it will dominate and control in international affairs; and the great object and purpose of this treaty is to organize the peace forces, to organize the moral influences, in behalf of adjustment of difficulties without conflict. Its great purpose is to let the peace machinery of all peace plans work—to utilize the everlasting, real aspiration of the human family.

It would seem to be incredible, after these explanations vouchsafed by men whose votes committed the United States to the Kellogg treaty, that anyone anywhere could have the slightest doubt as to the real meaning of that agreement.

THE MACHINE WINS

By WILLIAM COLLINS

UNEMPLOYMENT is an exceedingly serious disease of the industrial system which has not yet been properly diagnosed. It is clearly an evil but it has baffled the best intentions of employers and workers. The effect upon society is tragic. Described in simple terms, unemployment means that workers who, though physically able to meet the ordinary natural conditions of life, are made helpless to maintain themselves. These workers have the strength and disposition to extract a living from nature, but having long since been separated from the land, they are placed in an industrial community where they cannot perform any function that will allow them to protect themselves or their dependent families from destitution.

To the trade unions, lack of employment has constituted a problem that has grown from the early days of the factory system up to the present day, with its mass production methods of the great manufacturing plants. Like the old sweat shop, it is one of the many evils that has come with our industrial growth, nor does it differ from the inhuman conditions under which thousands of workers were killed and injured in industry each year, until an intelligent and aroused public provided health and workmen's compensation laws.

No cause of unemployment is better known than the machine. The change from man to automatic device has gone on, with the result that today the American industrial machine can produce much more than the human market can consume. This has resulted in depriving many of work.

The manufacture of automobiles, with its mass production methods and standardized tools, has brought about a revolution which is affecting every manufacturing plant in the United States and Canada. A clear understanding of the meaning of modern machinery is likewise provided by the skilled shoemaker. He would make two pairs of shoes a week, and if he worked fifty weeks in the year, his total output would be 100 pairs of shoes. Today the per capita output of a shoe factory, taking everyone who works, from the fellow who sweeps the floor to the stitcher at the machines, is 1,800 pairs of shoes, with a working year of 260 days.

Let us consider a few of the significant facts which General Motors showed during the year of 1923. Buick automobiles increased their daily production from 625 cars to 1,000. During that time they reduced their working force by 5,000.

The Ford plants as a rule extend every courtesy to investigators who are interested in their manufacturing method, but up to the present time, no one has ever learned what the labor turnover is in the Ford plants. By labor turnover, we mean the amount of men who are hired and discharged.

A bulletin issued by the Interstate Commerce Commission shows many of the first-class railroads report-

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ing increased earnings and profits, but very significant is the report that, during this so-called increased prosperity of the railroads, more than 180,000 railroad workers have been separated from their jobs. Freight trains are now being made up in certain parts of the country automatically without the use of a brakeman.

The American Federation of Labor has created a Research Bureau of Investigation on the subject of wages and unemployment. It has published several pamphlets through its headquarters in Washington, and it also publishes a monthly journal, the American Federationist. Among other subjects and articles, are tabulated statistics on employment conditions prevailing in their unions in practically every large city and town in the United States. It must be remembered that no government agency up to the present time is recording these conditions of unemployment. the trade unions give us the following information:

In the steel industry: Seven men now do the work which formerly required sixty to perform in casting pig iron. Two men now do the work which formerly required 128 to perform in loading pig iron. One man replaces forty-two men in operating open hearth furnaces.

In machine shops and railroad repair shops: One man replaces twenty-five skilled machinists with a gang of five or ten semi-automatic machines. Four men can now do in three to seven hours what it formerly took eight men three weeks to perform in repair work on locomotives, due to acetylene torches. Fifteen years ago it took fifteen to thirty hours to turn one pair of locomotive tires. Now it takes eight hours to turn six pairs with the same number of men. Thirty workers with ten machines now do the work of 240 workers with twenty machines in the Sun Tube Corporation machine shop.

Bricks: A brick-making machine in Chicago makes 40,000 bricks per hour. It formerly took one man eight hours to make 450.

Glass factories: One machine does the work of forty-one men in the manufacture of four-ounce bottles. In 25- and 40-watt electric bulbs, the output by machinery is thirty-one times that by hand production.

The information continues with tables showing displacement of the worker by automatic machinery in practically every manufacturing plant. During the years between 1920 and 1927 it is estimated that there has been a decrease of more than two million workers in the production industries, which include agriculture, transportation, telegraphs and cables. On the other hand it estimated that 1,000,000 have been absorbed in the new industries, such as radio, moving picture, mail-order houses and chain stores.

Consolidations are taking the place of banks, newspapers and business firms of all kinds with the inevitable result of relegating thousands of workers to the ranks of the unemployed. Because of the speed at which these automatic machines are operated, we find that the tendency among employers is also to displace the aging worker with the young. The importance of this phase of the unemployment situation can be best appreciated when we find the Pennsylvania state Department of Labor publishing in its monthly bulletin, the names of the firms operating plants in the state who were willing to hire men after they reach the age of forty-five.

The trade unions, through the American Federation of Labor, have devoted years of study to this problem. They were largely responsible for the calling of the first Unemployment Conference in 1921, which was headed by the President-elect—Mr. Hoover, who was then the Secretary of Commerce. Out of that conference came the understanding of many of our leading industrial leaders, that the trade union policy of high wages was the only way to maintain a purchasing power that could consume America's great output. This principle has been enunciated in and out of season for years by organized labor: that the problem of American industry is not over-production, but under-consumption. Just turn that thought over in your mind for a moment and you will get the whole crux of the problem of unemployment. Or let us put it another way. If the workers cannot buy the things they produce, the markets become glutted with goods, and the result is stoppage of work and unemployment. The inventive age we live in, with its continuous development of automatic machinery, would solve this problem easily if the same machines could carry out the most important part of the social life of the worker, by maintaining the family life, raising children and the other responsibilities of our civilization.

At the recent conference of state governors held in New Orleans, Governor Brewster of Maine presented his plan of creating a great reserve fund of $3,000,000,000, to be used in the construction of public works by the joint action of the federal, state and sub-divisions of our government. Its purpose is to tide the country over any great unemployment panic that may result from our present methods of production in industry. This is one of the plans that had been offered by the American Federation of Labor, and it affords great satisfaction to know that the project has the indorsement of President-elect Hoover. Other plans of the trade unions of the United States to meet the problems of unemployment are the creation of a nation-wide employment service, under either federal management or supervision. Stabilization of industry is the main approach to the problem of unemployment, but devolves primarily on management. The five-day working week is affording some relief, but it will have to be made universal.

Biography of an Agnostic

Life impaled him high on a cliff
And whittled him to a diminishing If.

LOUIS GINSBERG.

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THE MASS IN THE FOREST*

By LADISLAS REYMONT

GRADUALLY they gained confidence, and almost involuntarily, without complaint, they began to tell me about their everyday cares, the daily, systematic persecution they had to bear, the penalties they had to pay for everything: for baptizing and for not baptizing a child, for funerals which took place at night in secret, for weddings and confessions, for simply entering a church. They told me of the constant torment, the journeys to the police stations, courts and jails, of the eternal and fruitless search for justice, of endless nights spent in weeping and long days of constant fear, grief and suffering.

Well I knew their lives, but listening to these quiet, unvaryingly sad tales of never-ending struggle, unknown heroes, unwavering faith and boundless sacrifice, it seemed to me that a company of Christians of the time of Diocletian was telling me its bloody, heart-rending history. But they died only for their faith, while these sacrificed themselves also for their country. Each one of them so lived, suffered and struggled his whole life long, and this combat had lasted long, long years without respite.

Whole villages disappeared from the face of the earth, whole families perished, whole generations gave every drop of their blood and all their strength, and yet the survivors did not yield, they did not beg for mercy, and, forgotten, derided, poor, despised, they struggled on in the dreadful gloom of abandonment, with steadfast courage, fearless and unconquered.

I sat there speechless. These tales seemed steeped in tears. A bloody haze seemed to rise, and the whole house seemed full of sobs.

"If only it does not get worse! It's hard, very hard. . . ."

"We have borne it all up to the present, and we shall continue to bear it just as long as God wills it."

"Perhaps things may change! They say that after the war with Japan there will be better times."

So they talked, weaving faint, timorous hopes into pale visions of a brighter future. The conversation soon turned on the war. They pressed me for details with such eagerness that I had to tell them of almost all the big battles, and they listened with extraordinary attention: their grave faces became animated and shone with a strange joy, but at the most interesting point of my narrative somebody interrupted me with the exclamation:

"It is a punishment from God, as a warning!"

Suddenly one of the listening women burst into convulsive weeping, and amid sobs and moans told how her son had died in the war.

They ceased talking, and sat there sadly with bowed heads and tear-dimmed eyes, for nearly every one of them had some near and dear one in the fighting ranks. At last an old man wearing a rosary round his neck broke the silence, and kneeling before the sacred pictures, said solemnly:

"We must pray for them, for it is not for their own people they are dying."

They all knelt and prayed in fervent whispers.

Scarcely had they risen from their knees when somebody entered the room, crying:

"Get ready! It is time to start!"

I was hastily pulling on my coat when the old peasant with the rosary approached me, and looking me in the eyes he said meaningly:

"You wish to go with us to the Mission, sir, and there—God only knows what may happen."

I looked around the room; it was full. They gazed at me with fathomless eyes.

"I am going with you. I am ready for everything," I answered briefly.

They pressed my hand in silence, took their sticks and went out.

It was night, and a cool wind was blowing from the fields when we left the barn. We made straight for the forest, which darkened the horizon like a low-lying cloud. I drove second. Before me, on the first wagon, sat three peasants, and after us there must have been a long procession of wagons, for I could not see the end of it. The night was dark and cloudy and there was a slight frost, for the mud cracked under the wheels. We proceeded slowly and in deep silence. Here and there, from the villages lost in the night, came faint gleams of light; sometimes the wind brought the barking of a dog, the sound of distant wheels and the neighing of horses. We came at last to the highway and started at a lively pace toward the forest, now not far distant. The road was bordered by deep ditches, overgrown with bushes. Suddenly a commanding voice was heard. . . .

"Halt!"

Somebody jumped from the first wagon and threw himself on the ground. The whole procession stood as if rooted to the spot. I listened with bated breath. . . . There was a sound of wheels from somewhere, still a good distance away from us.

"A carriage with four horses! God knows who may be riding in it! All the wagons into the ditches! Let the squire alone remain in the road and drive on slowly!" commanded the voice.

** This is the second part of a three-part story by Ladislas Reymont which is appearing in The Commonweal. It deals with events in Hurdy, a village near Biala, which was the centre of Polish opposition to the armed proselytizing which reached a climax after the ukase of Alexander II in 1867. The translation is by Mr. K. Zuk Skarszewska.—The Editors.*

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There was a rustling of bushes and a splashing of water, and in a few moments the road was empty.

I proceeded slowly. The sound of carriage wheels came nearer and nearer. Soon I caught the gleam of the lantern, the sound of hoofs and the rattle of harness, and a moment later a carriage and four appeared. In the carriage sat several people who were speaking in Russian, but the darkness made it impossible for me to distinguish their faces.

"The police, sir, on some hunting expedition. Say nothing, why should we scare them!" whispered the same voice when the carriage had disappeared in the distance.

We took the road at the adge of the forest. I was just able to see from my watch that it was past ten. We skirted the forest for a good hour, and the darkness, the silence, the peaceful murmur of the trees, the monotonous creaking of the wagons and the neighing of the horses had such a soothing effect on me that I began to doze, when we came to some meadows overgrown with bushes and partly under water. This aroused me instantly, for the water squirted up from under the wheels and the horses' hoofs, and startled lapwings complained above me. Finally we arrived at a cross-roads, where stood a cross, and where we found a long line of wagons and many people waiting, and others continually arriving.

The great forest loomed before us like a dark wall.

It grew somewhat lighter, stars began to twinkle, and down the wind floated a sound like the distant echo of a rustic flute.

"Move on and keep together!" came the low-voiced command.

A few minutes later we reached the forest, and again halted, for a sharp and threatening voice from under the trees demanded:

"Who goes there?"

"Friends! Your own people!" was the impatient reply.

"There is no passage here; the dike is soaked and the water has carried away the bridge. You must go back!"

"We came with the hope that we might be able to pass," said a voice from the first wagon.

"Oh! Is that so? But the police also know how to cry 'friends!'"

The words "with the hope" were, as I learned later, the password agreed upon.

Again came that lingering, melancholy note, and we entered the forest. A plank bent under the weight of my wagon, and my horse began to rear and snort, but I crossed the frail bridge without accident, and was immediately after literally lost in the darkness. The mighty, dense forest covered us as with a black mantle; we could not even see the horses' croups, and the ghostly white trunks of the birches appeared vaguely, as in a dream. At one place I was obliged to get down and lead my horse by the bridle, for he slipped and stumbled on a dike covered with pebbles which gave under his hoofs like a keyboard. Sometimes I was up to my knees in mud; I ran into trees, and was obliged to walk bent almost double in order to avoid branches. We came at last to a dry spot. I felt the hard ground beneath my feet, I saw the stars above me, and the tree-tops, like big, black, straggly plumes, faintly outlined against the sky.

"Pull up the horses and do not move from the spot. We must let pass those who have come on foot."

I stopped, and soon I heard near me whispers, and the cautious, regular thud of many feet. In the darkness I could scarce perceive the faint, indistinct outlines of shadowlike forms, but I long heard the snapping of twigs trampled down by the thousands that were passing in endless procession, and the hollow, measured beat of their march. The forest gradually became full of a hushed, trembling murmur, like the sound of inrushing waves, and the frightened horses began to jibe. And still the procession passed, seemingly unending, and the murmur rose and fell continuously, sometimes receding into the distance but flowing always in the same direction, somewhere in the depths of the forest. . . .

I do not know how long it lasted, but it seemed to me that at length the whole forest swayed, moved and flowed together with that invisible, mighty wave. . . .

Not far from me a fire suddenly shone out, and its flames, well fed with branches, rose higher and higher. Hundreds of people moved about in the red glow. I went to warm myself, for it was very cold. Somebody made room for me, saying in a friendly tone:

"Make yourself comfortable, sir, for it's a long time until morning."

I toasted myself with keen enjoyment. The fire crackled merrily, now scattering a shower of sparks, now rearing a flaming mane toward the tree-tops, and all around thronged the rust-red trunks of the pines in a dense, opaque thicket, swarming with people, horses and wagons. Near me people were talking in low tones.

"They will not arrive before dawn."

"If only nothing happens to them on the way!"

"There, on the spot, it is dry, and can be entered only from one side. The police would not find it."

"Let them track us! The bog is deep and will tell no tales."

"We must soon think of starting; the women should be there already."

The conversation suddenly ceased, for some peasant appeared, and cried:

"Put out the fire! The glow can be seen from the fields."

In a moment the fire was smothered with earth and trampled out, and soon after we were moving in a direction unknown to me.

"Is it still very far?" I asked a shadowy figure walking beside the wagon.

"Not very far now; we shall soon be there."

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THE CRAFT OF THE SCREEN

By FRANCIS P. DONNELLY

What has the motion picture to do with art? To what extent can one say that there are standards which the story-telling camera must observe? Is the talking picture an advance or a mistake? These questions are important because the corner theatre means more to the nation's art life than any other agency. Father Donnelly meets them frankly and with more than a little optimism. His paper is an interesting judgment of a popular art by one who writes with full knowledge of what the great critics, from Aristotle to Saintsbury, have had to say.—The Editors.

WHEN motion pictures first began, producers had their thoughts centered on the idea of pictures rather than on the idea of motion. Tableau was more in evidence than sequence. Such an attitude was natural because the photography was more obvious at first than the continuity and succession. The Italian films have kept longest to the tableau and have striven for success by enlarging their groups and by choice of great natural backgrounds. Germany has been experimenting and has produced fanciful pictures. In some cases, as in The Last Laugh, the continuity has been remarkable; the realism extremely effective, and though a tax was put on attention by the absence of all titles, yet the success of the experiment was noteworthy.

America has been more popular in appeal than Germany and more quickly caught the idea that motion pictures are better suited to the succession and continuity of a story than to the rigid posing of the tableau. The motion pictures have passed from sculpturesque or picturesque immobility to the fluidity of narration, from scenic to dramatic.

It is thirteen years beyond the sesquicentennial since, in 1766, Lessing published his famous Laocoon, which marked an epoch in literary and artistic criticism. Analogy, fruitful in suggestions yet fallacious to the unwary, asserted that poetry was painting in words, as painting was poetry in pigments. Count Caylus on the basis of that analogy wished to establish criteria of excellence by judging either art in terms of the other. Lessing objected and by analyzing the mediums of painting and of poetry, showed their essential difference. False analogy still has its victims and correct analysis continues to be the best method of their rescue. Lessing would perhaps be puzzled for a while if he witnessed an art which used pictures as a medium and yet possessed the sequence that characterizes words and their corresponding images in the imagination and thought. But his perplexity would disappear through analysis of the medium, and, no doubt, he would approve of the change of emphasis in motion pictures from pictures to motion. Lessing would also try to establish the limitations in the composite medium of the new art. Count Caylus's art heresy has modern exemplifications.

Motion pictures should surely not be affected by the latest heresy of non-representative art. There have been only a few attempts, chiefly German, to bring about through bizarre scenery and symbolic characters a direct emotion, but the attempts put so much work on the mind that there was slight artistic feeling from the picture. You must be highly intellectual to create or to comprehend a purely impressionistic art product. Art is for the people, and happily the people feel by means of their imagination. There is such a thing as being so intellectual in art product as to be unintelligible. Motion pictures are too popular to understand or feel the infinite suggestiveness of that painter who covered a wall with red to depict the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. When the popular owner asked the mural decorator where the Israelites and Egyptians were, he was told that the Israelites were all over and the Egyptians were all under. The ultimate triumph of impressionism and non-representative art!

Motion-picture art is as representative as painting and, besides, it is as successive as drama and story. Why is it that moving water, rippling in the moonlight, rolling shoreward in foam, plunging into clouds of mist from a sheer cliff in cataracts or dashing high in storm—is always beautiful on the screen? The movements of large numbers, the crowded dance, the riotous mob, the marshaling of armies, have indeed action, an element in which Aristotle put one of the chief sources of literary interest; but in the motion pictures have not these multitudes and the multiplying waters a special effect because they are so completely in harmony with the medium of the art, with the multiple picture whose continuity comes from a rapid succession of fleeting impressions?

D. W. Griffith, who did so much in The Birth of the Nation and has done so little since, is a puzzling disappointment to any student of motion-picture art. In The Birth of the Nation there were great landscape backgrounds, the movements of great numbers, thrilling pursuit scenes, and a fine mingling of sequences and tableaus with flashbacks and close-ups for realistic detail. Many features of that wonderful picture have passed into ordinary practice, but there was one feature which does not seem to have received the attention it merited. Although tableau is not for the most part as effective as sequence, because fundamentally it is not in keeping with the multiplicity and continuity of the film, yet the tableau has bigness of effect which moving detail does not always give, and Griffith succeeded in The Birth of the Nation in giving the thrill of movement with the awe of tableau by unifying a

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series of tableaus. Outside was a rioting mob and down the street in house after house was shown group after group differing in everything except the common element of fear which struck in from the outer violence.

The Birth of the Nation was good beyond the propaganda of The Clansman, its source; in fact, it might be said, in spite of the propaganda. But Mr. Griffith went off propagandizing and was caught by the lure of realism. He has abandoned suggestion, has lost himself in accuracy of historical detail, and has wound up in the veriest melodrama. He has been successful in spots but has been unsuccessful in the whole presentation. In The Birth of a Nation the subject was bigger than the story, and the national issues of civil war, slavery and carpet-bagging loomed ever in the background, and the staging in great scenic landscapes brought many points of the picture to the verge of sublimity. But when has mere accuracy of detail or meticulous realism ever approached within miles of the sublime?

The perfection of motion-picture sequence is found in pursuit scenes, and such scenes are in full harmony with the film medium of the art. The riding of the hero to rescue the heroine evokes a cheer from the youngsters, and a battalion of police or a company of soldiers on the same errand to foil the villains creates pandemonium. The chase against death gives taut interest and is watched even by the youngsters in hushed awe or in stifled gasps. It is, however, the comedy that has availed itself most of the pursuit. In fact the chase has become almost a convention in screen comedy. In the unexpected the ancients put the finest humor, and a well-conducted pursuit with alternations of success and disappointment, with a bewildering variety of obstacles and elusive triumph ever beckoning on ahead—such a pursuit gives us the perfection of the unexpected and keeps us on well-pointed tenterhooks of tragedy or of comedy or of merely drama.

The moving picture on its way to be a story and not a mere picture made one fine advance by giving up the tableau and resorting to continuity and sequence. Another advance was made by giving depth to the picture. The illusion of movement is more effective in results for the spectators and is more evident, yet the illusion of depth in a thin film on a flat screen has its artistic pleasures, quite keen for those who are educated to be aware of them. The first pictures, when reproduced today beside the improved product, obtrude their mechanical flatness. All backgrounds in early films are at right angles to the camera, and all actors are parallel to the background.

When mechanical difficulties of the camera were overcome, the demand for movement gave some illusion of depth, and it has become conventional to move the characters about where the background is stationary. The conventionality is patent when there is a lack of action.

Depth was also given to the film by picturing the scenes at various angles. The suggestiveness and variety gained by such views added very much to the art pleasures of the story. The opening of room into room, the long corridors and immense halls leading back to staircases, the winding steps to upper stories, the fantastic creations of Douglas Fairbanks and of the German producers, such tremendous backgrounds as are displayed in The Patriot, which rival the architecture that the Venetian painters erected in Palestine, all these added fathoms of illusion to a shallow film.

Again, artificial skylines of receding valleys, of towering mountains and clouded heavens have been so perfected that only the expert can detect them, while most imagine they are gazing into depths of space.

These devices and others like them are external, in a sense, to the story, and depend upon mechanical contrivances. The most artistic way of attaining depth is by suggestion in the story itself. Suggestion in all arts is the most effective means to overcome the difficulties of the medium. The Greeks were so objective that they gave motion and life to the painting and sculpture described in their literature. So Homer and Euripides and Theocritus among others. Moderns are more sophisticated, and, with Keats, they never forget that the Grecian urn is an urn, whereas in Homer the figures would be as real as the characters in his story. Where sophistication prevents such enthusiastic coöperation, the artist must avail himself of suggestion. What is off-stage is seen through its effects upon the stage. Storms are so real now in moving pictures that dripping umbrellas, drenched oil-skins or snow-clogged boots are not needed to suggest what we can actually see. The mob in The Birth of a Nation is suggested often and so produces its artistic thrill better than when the actual crowd is pictured. A suicide was in one picture suggested with powerful effect by a startled deer, one moment feeding quietly and the next moment frightened into hurried flight by the pistol shot which could easily be imagined. These and other suggestions, which anyone may see on the screen, give fine depth to a picture, leading the imagination into backgrounds profounder than any the direct scene could produce .

How will the sound in the new moving pictures contribute to illusion and depth? Some of the critics are opposed to the resonant film, but there can be no doubt that it has come to stay. Thought and experimentation will soon develop a technique to keep pace with the perfected mechanism of sound reproduction. The sound film may appear to some a toy, but it should not be forgotten that the zoetrope, the primitive ancestor of our great picture theaters, was a toy no bigger than a hat-box.

The sound film will have a season of mere reproduction of various noises found in life. Selection and art, however, should soon advance beyond the mere copying of reality to true realism and true idealism. The limitations of the medium must be recognized.

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The chopped-up dialogue is not a complete success in the picture film unless action accompanies the words. The mere shifting of speakers is crude. So the dialogue in the sound films does not promise success, unless action predominates and a rigid selection governs the words. Perhaps convention will accustom the patrons to the alternating sides of a dialogue in successive views, as it has accustomed them to the successive pictures themselves. Good directors saw early that such divided dialogue was heavy and slow and losing its illusive powers in mechanical conventionality. The disjointedness of the dialogue is accentuated in sound screens, and such interrupted conversations are better curtailed.

As with pictures, so with the sound screens—they will be at their best where they represent action and suggestion. Many modern dramas had increased and decreased speech eliminating soliloquies and asides, and surely the sound film will be even more abstinent of speech. Sounds will have to be as carefully selected as scenes. Indeed the sounds will have to be more rigidly chosen, because sounds apart from language are not as significant and representative as scenes.

In the matter of depth, sounds can add other fathoms to the screen. The variety of sounds which can be heard off-stage, accompanying prompting and governing the action, is countless, and each of these sounds will give depth to the scene, while at the same time it contributes suggestive features to the story. As the orchestral accompaniment now parallels the scenes, other sounds may parallel the action. By those in a room every noise of the outer world may be heard, and if the sound is properly idealized, it will thrill the audience through its impression upon the actors. Dialogue can be carried on with the speaker out of sight. The picture element is now so prominent in directors' minds that they think a character must be seen to be heard. The knocking at Macbeth's door and the other noises in Shakespeare's tragedies will chill with their significance. The applause and din of a circus, the hymns and sermon of a church, all the myriad music of life in pleasure or in industry or in social activity, can echo behind the film, and the imagination of the people will stretch out to a world horizon.

If tragedy and serious comedy can be enriched by the deepened sound film, the farce will be hilarious with new possibilities of the incongruous and the unexpected. The humorous complications which may arise from overheard and misinterpreted sounds and talk are many, and they will be all the more eagerly taken up, because farce comedy need not have the same plausibility of action as serious comedy and tragedy. Aristotle's law of probability does not hold so strictly for comedy as for tragedy, because only the logically likely will sadden, whereas what is illogical will cause a laugh if there is no pain to self in the lack of consequence.

The moving picture put the world of vision in all its aspects on record and unrolled it for our delight. Will the photophone, if we may so style it, be less delightful than the photograph? Hardly. Let the world of sound be photophoned and then unwound for the entranced ears of humanity!

THE TAR-BRUSH

By HENRY S. WHITEHEAD

THAT the sea-serpent story, which flourished in and about Mr. Don C. Seitz's "dreadful decade" in American life and letters, is as dead as a doornail, would require no particularized evidence. It is a matter of common knowledge. Interest in the denizens of the deep has not abated, nor is there any perceptible ban upon writings dealing with oceanography in all its forms. Similarly, although the Negro story in its various forms, from that of Mr. Octavus Roy Cohen up and down the scale of seriousness, is very much alive these days, the particular kind or type of Negro story which hinged its plot upon the possession or alleged possession of a "taint" of Negro blood in the veins (to say nothing of the arteries) of a central character, is quite as dead as the sea serpent.

I do not expect to try to prove this contention, because I do not believe it requires that specific demonstration which would undoubtedly derive from a questionnaire honestly answered, sent to literary agents or to a group of representative magazine editors. The real evidence may be found by the "circumspice" process. The kind of story I mean was once a best seller. Pudd'nhead Wilson is an outstanding example, and there were many others. It was once a plot as much standardized as Horatio Alger's formula. It is years since such a story has seen the light in any American magazine of general circulation, despite the growing popularity of the Negro himself as a character in fiction.

One obvious reason for the general consensus on the part of American editors in dropping this type of tale definitely out of the scope of publication is that the general public has got tired of that plot. But another was revealed, in a conversation which I had a few months ago with the active head of one of the leading literary agencies in New York City. I was told that no agent (in the speaker's opinion) and no magazine editor would touch such a story, because it is regarded as unfair, and unethical. This was an authoritative statement, coming from that source. It fits precisely into what appear to be the facts, i. e., that there are sufficient persons in the United States

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in that precarious mestizo category to form an objecting class.

One may easily hazard the guess that the number of white people in these United States who have a touch of the tar-brush is so large as to have taken on the importance indicated by the typical story about them being "unfair" and "unethical" from the editorial viewpoint. It is not fair—so runs the reasoning—to these mestizos to feature their peculiar and delicate position in American society and so embarrass them. Therefore, among other reasons, of course, but, I think, predominantly for that reason, "the drop of colored blood" story has gone into the discard.

There is current a general idea that the Negro is more robust than the Caucasian. Recently the newspapers reported a remark of the Reverend Dr. Proctor made to a congregation of his own (colored) people and the (white) congregation of the Reverend Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, to the effect that Dr. Proctor thought the colored race would outlast the white race. "The rising tide of color" and similar modern expressions seem uniformly to voice the same conviction or the same fear. One of the commonest delusions of the popular mind is that of the black baby, as the occasional devastating result of a marriage between a white girl and a husband "with a drop of colored blood." When that happens it means that the white girl has been unfaithful to her mestizo husband—with a black man. The ethnic rule is that a child of such a mixed marriage is never darker than the darker of the two parents.

Ever since the ship Desire sailed out of the port of Marblehead in the same year (1636) which saw the founding of Harvard University, to bring back slaves for the American plantations from the West Indies, and so inaugurate the slave trade which was the backbone of many a New England fortune; or, more precisely, ever since that sad cargo was landed on American soil, there has been a steady stream of mixed-blood Americans. Such persons are practically all of surreptitious origin—illegitimate. In the solid South the state laws uniformly prohibit the marriage of a white person with another possessing any admixture of African blood. Outside the solid South, marriages of the kind are so rare as to be conspicuous.

But there has been no abatement in the phase of human nature which produces the type of person celebrated by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe in the characters of George and Eliza, or by Samuel Clemens in that of the mother of the substituted white baby in Pudd'nhead Wilson. The mulatto, so runs the hard American proverb, curses his white father. His position in this country is not enviable. He is neither fish nor flesh, and there is no market for good red herring. When his Negro traits or appearance are at all obvious, or when he is known to be part Negro he cannot have social or cultural contacts with white Americans. He is, too, in a sense, looked down upon by genuine blacks, although probably any one of these swart brethren would give his left foot to straighten his kinks or lighten his skin to match the yellow whom he affects to despise.

Most Negro accomplishment, so dear to the hearts of that section of our intelligentsia now engaged in exploiting it, is derived from the Caucasian ancestry of the individual Negroes who have attained cultural distinction. Black Africa has been culturally static for many thousands of years, and the real African culture, i. e., black culture, is in the life of primitive barbarism or savagery common to Tuaregs, Zulus, the Swahili-speaking East Coasters, or the despised Hottentots and the blacks of the Transvaal—a wide range among the non-Caucasian natives of the dark continent; a range of nations, peoples and tongues, which had practised mutual enslavement, pillage, torture and other phases of primitive barbarity and savagery eons before their continent was penetrated by the white man.

That the mulatto is the superior, considered from the Caucasian cultural and civic standpoint, of his black ancestors and black neighbors should go without saying. It would go without saying except for the devastating prejudice of the moron mind which persists in its incurable inertia of belief that the mulatto is inferior both to black and white. It does go without saying in the West Indies, except in Haiti, "the black republic," where no Caucasian may own land; where the liberator, Dessalines, produced the Haitian flag by removing the hated white from France's tricolor; and where the local basis of esteem is in direct proportion to the blackness of the skin.

In the West Indies, generally speaking, the color question, with respect to the person of mixed blood, is the reverse of ours. There, where miscegenation has progressed unchecked since long before the voyage of the ship Desire, the black man doffs his hat to his colored superior. There the middle class, germane to the solid European background which supports the West Indian social structure, is almost wholly colored. These colored West Indians are very worthy people. They are self-respecting people of a definite social status, professional, storekeeping; generally well-educated, pleasant, courteous people. Their general character of excellence is primarily due, obviously, to the fact that they possess a definite, clear-cut status in their communities. They are not in a precarious or equivocal position. Economically and otherwise their interests are identical with those of the Caucasian minority aristocracy of the West Indian communities, and with that minority they usually make common cause. In the West Indies the line-up is white and colored on one side; "quashee"—West Indian name for the black brother—on the other. On Martinique, the visitor is likely to be told that Josephine Tascher de la Pagerie, Napoleon's consort, was from the West Indies. Since long before Alexander Hamilton came from St. Croix, there has been a steady stream of emigration to the United States. And this did not

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pause until the recent Harding administration put on the quota lid, primarily to keep out of the United States the remainder of the Polish-Russian Jews. The black belt of Harlem is crowded with West Indian Negroes. So, too, are parts of Chicago, and other centres.

But the West Indians who come here are not all elevator men. "The States" have always been the mecca for the sunburned young gentleman of the West Indies desiring to continue his education. American institutions of learning have turned out vast numbers of such young gentlemen, who have quietly remained, their sunburn much improved by several years in our comparatively cold climate, to marry—white—settle, and become absorbed into American life as Caucasians.

Another definite source of what once would have been called the "pollution" of our white American blood, has been Denmark. Since 1666, Denmark's principal colonial possession had been the Danish West Indies, consisting of the islands of St. Thomas and St. Jan. To this group, by purchase from France in 1733, was added the much larger and more fertile island of St. Croix (Santa Cruz). These islands (Greenland, the other Danish colony, being practically worthless for colonization) drew from the mother country large numbers of young Danes for the prosperous sugar business of St. Croix; the equally attractive commercial affairs of St. Thomas, clearing-house port of the vast trade of the Lesser Antilles; and for the personnel of dozens of successive garrisons. In a surprisingly large number of cases these Danes married colored women, and, there being no prohibitive sentiment about it at home, took them and the children of such unions home with them when their terms of enlistment or colonial service were over.

In innumerable cases, too, in this Danish colony, as elsewhere, mestizos born out of wedlock came into the world to swell the population of His Danish Majesty's loyal possessions. Many of these, too, went to Denmark for various reasons, as was only natural. I have heard it said by Danes of the upper classes that their country's lower classes are thus shot through and through with colored blood, over a period of more than two and one-half centuries. The African traits and superficial appearance have been, very largely, absorbed. The Danes are virile. Even so, there are a great many dark Danes. The United States has its share, of course, of Danish-originated citizens; and these, chiefly from those same lower classes, which have mixed their blood with that of the natives of the Danish West Indies.

In 1917 Uncle Sam purchased the Danish West Indies to keep the Hun out of St. Thomas, where the old Hamburg-American Company's docks are now the United States naval station. Uncle Sam's quotas do not, therefore, apply to the Virgin Islands, as the Danish West Indies have been renamed.

More than one good American family went into the West Indies in those well-nigh forgotten days when sugar was king there and those islands attracted moderate capital to the gentlemanly profession of sugar-planting. Many such families have been absorbed into West Indian life, and are now colored. The same thing has happened on a large scale to the Caucasian gentry, refugees from Haiti to other West Indian islands, at the time of the débâcle of Toussaint l'Ouverture's rebellion. These in many—perhaps most—instances, made their port of refuge that same St. Thomas, capital of the American Virgin Islands. These gentry, of various national origins, now West Indian, have taken on liberal splashes of the tar-brush. It is said that only about 2 percent of pure Caucasians remain in the permanent population of Jamaica.

The situation as it applies in the continental United States is not precisely a problem. But it is a phenomenon. The white West Indian mestizo is doing very well indeed here in the United States. I know personally a good many, and I know something of the history of a good many others. They are good people, on the whole, useful citizens, people for the most part of culture and refinement; quantitatively considered, their blood is overwhelmingly Caucasian. A case out of actual personal knowledge will perhaps illustrate the quality of such persons.

A colored West Indian of my acquaintance, educated abroad, married a Caucasian European lady. Their son, decorated, was killed in the world war, a captain in a crack European regiment. By his second marriage, my acquaintance had four more sons. His second wife, a most estimable woman, was of mulatto parentage on both sides. The man himself is the son of a gentleman planter of his island and a brown woman. He is of legitimate birth, and is a man of the highest character. All the living sons, like their uncle, their mother's brother, are white, graduates of American colleges, living in the United States, and two of them are married to white American women. The father told me that he withheld his consent to these two marriages until the young women had written to him on his island stating that they were aware of the admixture of colored blood in their prospective husbands. Only then would he give his parental consent to the marriages.

In this statement about the tar-brush's extent in our midst, I am neither deploring a situation nor attempting to ply the muck-rake. It is, at least, a matter of general interest to know that Africa has made such inroads upon the white population of the civilized world; upon our American population. I dare say there are Ku Kluxers, even—many white mestizos flourish in the Middle-west—who are really of this class. Proof I cannot offer, in the nature of the case. The passing-over process is essentially, necessarily, surreptitious. There are no records, no data available. Only the facts as known to an individual can be set forth. The case must rest for its convincingness upon its inherent plausibility.

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COMMUNICATIONS

TARIFF FOR THE FARMER

Rowley, Alberta.

TO the Editor:—Many thanks for your kind letter and copy of The Commonweal containing the article by Professor Stewart on farm relief.

Professor Stewart's statistics are startling and reflect conditions of which we in Canada have had a general impression for some years. Indeed, our condition during 1922, 1923 and 1924 approached closely those now prevailing in agriculture in the West and Northwest of your country, and so we can understand not only the suffering among the agricultural people but also the dangerous effect such a condition will have on the whole of the United States if it is not remedied.

The renewal by Professor Stewart of Alexander Hamilton's proposal to place an export bounty on agricultural commodities is very interesting, and certainly would appear a relatively simple method of restoring to the farmer some of the "protected industries" protection. Unfortunately, it appears that in the long run primary producers make up most of the taxes directly or indirectly, and only by direct income taxation, or business profits taxes, or similar methods of direct taxation, could the farmer hope to escape the incidence. Professor Stewart recognizes this but overlooks (apparently) another difficulty which has made itself felt in Australia, where a modified form of the proposal he makes has been in operation. There an export bounty enables the farmer to charge home consumers a price out of relation to world prices, and at once organized labor insists that the increased cost of living necessitates higher wages. In that country of arbitration wage boards, wages have been raised on such representation, whereupon the manufacturers have demanded higher tariffs to compensate them for increased production costs. And so the vicious circle brought no good to anyone in the long run.

It will not be any use to say that it is not proposed to give a bounty sufficiently large to enable the farmer to secure a largely enhanced price for his produce. The fact is that even Liverpool wheat prices(in the illustration used by Professor Stewart) will not make agriculture prosperous. Therefore the raising of the price in the United States for the produce of agriculture, if agriculture is to be made really prosperous, will have to be on some other basis than Liverpool quotations. If this be granted, then the cost of living all over the States will inevitably increase, with reactions similar in character to those that took place in Australia. I am afraid that, impossible as it may appear of accomplishment in the near future, one of the first steps necessary to reëstablish agriculture will be drastic reductions in the tariff on the goods used by the farmer, and the next the development of efficient coöperative marketing agencies of the large scale type.

Agriculture in Canada is by no means as prosperous as the annual statements of our bankers and railroad presidents would lead us to believe. Indeed, the farmer is just about tottering on the brink of debt. Most are hanging onto the edge, and only an exceptional volume of wheat saved us during recent years.

We feel that our pools are doing more for us than any legislative agency has ever done or is likely to do, and if we can but reduce by tariff cuts the price of most of the goods we purchase, we will be at least on fairer economic ground than has yet been our lot.

I fear, however, that both the Professor and myself are likely to get into deep waters if we ever attempt to state any single remedy which will restore prosperity to agriculture; it is possible that we might find ourselves wallowing through "profits, interest and rent," we might even tackle the whole question of the control of credit from the Douglas basis, we might find ourselves in such a situation that, grasping at the nearest shore, we would probably save ourselves, for the moment, and consign posterity to Allah.

E. J. GARLAND.

RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN SWEDEN

(The Commonweal is glad to print the following letter submitted by a prominent Swedish Catholic, with reference to matters commented upon editorially in the issue of July 18, 1928. There follows another letter from Dr. Söderblom, written in reply to an inquiry. We are not in a position to do more than suggest a careful reading of both statements.—The Editors.)

Tumba, Sweden.

TO the Editor:—I have received the issue of The Commonweal for November 7, 1928, which contains a reply by Dr. Nathan Söderblom, bishop of Upsala, to certain comments on the position of Catholics in Sweden which had been published previously. It is only natural that you should find it difficult to secure accurate information; and since this is most desirable, I should like to make the following remarks.

Dr. Söderblom's letter is very much like everything he writes in controversy with Catholics, or, indeed, about the Catholic Church generally. The essential points are skilfully circumvented.

Quite recently he issued two statements which bear upon questions vital to the Catholic Church in this country. The first is a commentary on proposed legislation to extend religious freedom. This legislation was laid before the Swedish Reichstag during the 1927 session by a committee appointed for the purpose, but no action was taken. When and in what form the matter will be introduced to another Reichstag it is impossible to determine.

The committee's resolution stressed certain concessions to Catholics, it is true, but was far from meeting all the desires of a Church hitherto beset with so many difficulties. For instance, no reference was made to the important question as to how the Church books, which in Sweden are also civil registers, are to be kept.

In view of this oversight, the apostolic vicar for Sweden, Dr. Erik John Mueller, bishop of Lorea, visited the king and asked for the restoration of the right to keep Church books.

The second statement by Dr. Söderblom is a reply to this endeavor of the apostolic vicar. Of course the statement cannot be attributed to Dr. Söderblom alone, because it is authorized by the chapter of the see of Upsala, over which he merely presides. But when he does not vote against such declarations, he must be held accountable for them.

How and to what extent, then, did he intervene in behalf of Catholics? It is true that when the custody of the Church books was taken away from Catholic pastors during 1910, Dr. Söderblom, in his capacity as professor of theology and member of the Upsala chapter, protested against this act, in unison with the majority of the leaders of the Swedish Church. It is also true that as head of the Upsala chapter he declared, together with a majority of the other members, for the restoration of the right to keep the books.

But the chapter advocated only the restoration of the right to the four old parishes. Meanwhile the number has grown

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to ten. Secondly, the statement signed by Dr. Söderblom so motivated the semi-restoration that its effect was worse than that of a flat denial would have been. This impression was shared by one member of the Upsala chapter itself, who voted "no" because he felt that the statement implied opposition to rather than approval of the plea by the apostolic vicar. Why? Because it was stipulated that even the four parishes should not be given the right in question unless the Catholic authorities agreed that, in mixed marriage cases, no demand that the children must be brought up as Catholics be made.

In so far as the fate of a Swedish government official who had joined the Catholic Church is concerned, no amount of verbal cosmetics can remove the fact that the following paragraph of the Law for Dissenters, passed on October 31, 1873, is still in force:

"If anyone who announces his retirement from the Church of Sweden is in the government employ, he must be dismissed from the service unless the post is of such a character that the incumbent might have been appointed to it regardless of his religious affiliations, or unless the king or the governing body considers it expedient to allow him to remain."

Since this paragraph is still in force, it is quite correct to say that a Swedish citizen who becomes a convert to Catholicism puts his job in jeopardy if he be a government employee, It may be added that the constitution (Paragraph 4) stipulates that the members of city councils must profess the "pure evangelical faith." In this respect, therefore, every convert would automatically lose his position.

In so far as the schools are concerned, Dr. Söderblom is correct in saying that all are open to Catholics and that these Catholics can take all examinations for degrees—with one exception. The normal schools which prepare teachers for the lower schools do not permit, even as yet, the matriculation of Catholics. Thus Swedish Catholics cannot train, in their own country, teachers for the schools which the state permits them to build.

When Dr. Söderblom says that Catholics in Sweden enjoy greater liberties than do Protestants in Catholic countries, one wonders to which nations he is referring. The comparison does not apply to Austria, Italy, Spain, France or Belgium. Is he referring to some Latin-American country?

BARON OSTEN-SACKEN.

Arkebiskopen, Upsala.

TO the Editor:—I have always publicly and privately spoken in favor of everything that belongs to real religious freedom, but as long as the priests of the Church of Sweden have to keep the statistics and the registers of the Swedish people, that is of course a civic duty, not a task belonging to their priestly functions proprement dite, etc. It is natural that every Swedish citizen contributes to the statistics of the country. We hope that we shall be able to deliver our priests at least to a certain extent from that duty of keeping the statistics, which is rather heavy in big congregations, because it intrudes on their priestly and religious and moral duties.

On the other hand, however, the wish of the Roman Catholic clergy in our country to keep registers now, as before 1910-1915, has always been favored and supported by myself. Although an important minority in my own chapter in Upsala supported this time another opinion simply because the petition addressed by my friend, the Roman Catholic bishop in Stockholm, to the Swedish government contains, alas, some hints and words which seem to indicate that the right, or rather duty, of keeping registers and statistics would be used for the benefit and propaganda of a particular confession in the Church.

By the way, it is rather curious to read that in a country with about six million belonging to the Church of Sweden and some 3,500 Roman Catholics, it is supposed to prove intolerance and religious despotism not to wish the introduction of Roman Catholic monastic orders, while in Roman Catholic countries like France and others in the old and new world such monastic orders are not permitted.

I think that correctness in statements is not only a good general duty but especially desirable in the relationship of the different sections of the Christian Church. I do not see either any reason why our country should be described in a way which is not correct. I am reading just now a copy of your statement in the Catholic Bulletin in Dublin where I find, for instance, the same incredible and incorrect relation of facts.

I am vividly reminded of what happened in 1910 when the Roman Catholic clergy lost its right to keep full registers and statistics with public authority and when Roman Catholic citizens became bound to go to the priests of the Church of Sweden for things belonging to the registers. I received Roman Catholic papers from different countries blaming Sweden for its Lutheran intolerance and despotism. The fact was that that change was made exclusively on the proposal of the Bureau of Statistics to the government, because the Bureau of Statistics found it better for its purpose to have the statistics made by the priests of our Church. Swedish Church authorities that had been asked in the matter had most clearly and strongly uttered themselves to the government in favor of the right of the Roman clergy in Sweden to keep registers, as hitherto. The situation was that the Church in Sweden wanted the Roman clergy in Sweden to keep that right, while the civic authorities found it better for the purpose to make the statistics more uniform.

I wrote to a very distinguished and truth-loving Roman Catholic friend in Paris and sent the facts, and those facts were fairly stated, and I received Roman Catholic papers where I was most kindly described as a good and tolerant man. I desire no praise. But I only wish that in more or less necessary discussions between the sections of the Christian Church, which belong anyhow, according to my ideas, to the same Una Sancta et Apostolica Ecclesia, a fair and correct method should be used.

I am, of course, very willing to give to you every detail about the committee on religious minorities and the remarks of the chapter of Upsala about its proposals. I have never opposed those proposals. On the contrary I have also in my chapter given the most wholehearted support to every change in the direction of religious freedom. But there is a number of details, where the chapter of Upsala had some criticisms in the one direction or the other direction.

Thinking that the space of The Commonweal is rather limited I do not send all those details, but I shall be very glad to do it if you wish.

I am interested to hear that you were asked to declare your religion in asking for a visa in Sweden. I did not know it. But it might be characteristic of the fact that we here in our country regard religion as a most important fact in human life, and we have the feeling that a man should not be in any way troubled, but rather proud to declare his faith.

NATHAN SÖDERBLOM,
Archbishop of Upsala.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

The Marriage Bed

THIS play is a dramatization by Ernest Pascal of his own novel of the same name. In its general form and dialogue, it presents a very creditable piece of dramatic work. And it is safe to say that the main theme, although embroidered with several of the modern sophistries, is more constructive than nine out of ten plays you are apt to see today.

It is becoming increasingly important in reporting on the output of the modern theatre to consider plays as symptoms of today's various confused currents of thought. There is rarely a play to which you cannot take prompt exception in one or more details of its theme or presentation—and when I say this, I am ignoring, for the moment, that entire group of plays put out obviously for box-office purposes alone. Plays of this latter type are merely exhibitions staged by irresponsible managers with the single idea of tickling the public with obscenity. Occasionally, the purpose is slightly concealed behind the mask of beautiful staging or of a so-called moral ending. But the intention of the authors and producers is always easy to detect. On the other hand, we have an entire group of plays written by people who are more or less in earnest and who are endeavoring to use the theatre as a platform for their own ideas. The Marriage Bed belongs here.

Its main theme is that marriage as an institution is a far more permanent and lasting thing than the impulses and vagaries of married people. You can gather from the conflict of emotions called to life in this play that the very fact of marriage and of children calls into being a responsibility of the married pair toward each other, toward their children and toward the community they live in, which far transcends in importance any lapse of fidelity by either of the parties. You can gather that marriage is not something to be set aside for the gratification of the first sensual whim, and that if a couple only have the courage and understanding to live through a crisis when it comes, they will eventually find their happiness in the life work they have undertaken together. To this extent you can say that Ernest Pascal sets himself squarely against the modern trend. He knows, and makes it very clear, that the love engendered by marriage is a thing of many facets, that it differs vastly from the love that is simply and solely passion, and that beside it everything else is ephemeral and a delusion. He does not go the full length, however, in admitting that marriage constitutes a responsibility "for better or for worse." In fact, you get the impression before the play is over that he is talking more about biological marriage than the legal or sacramental institution. He creates a great deal of sympathy for one young girl in the play who gives up everything to join her life to that of a man already married, and it is hard to discover whether this sympathy is created in order to gain approval of what she does, or merely as a realistic comment on the way in which even fine characters can be trapped into doing the wrong thing.

The story concerns George and Mary Boyd, and George's temporary infatuation for Christine Kennedy. Following in some respects the technique of Paris Bound, a mistaken divorce of an older generation is brought in as an object lesson, and it is Mary Boyd's younger sister who becomes entangled in a problem exactly the reverse of Mary's. Ann Davis brings a splendid equipment and understanding to the characterization of Mary Boyd, and Alan Dinehart, as George, does what I believe to be the finest work of his career. All the other principal parts are particularly well taken by Edward Emery, Elizabeth Patterson and Helen Chandler. Aside from the undue sympathy showered on Miss Chandler's part, there is another unfortunate episode in the play connected with Christine Kennedy's attitude toward her expected child. On the whole, this is a play that is 80 percent right in intention, but far less right in execution. (At the Booth Theatre.)

The Lady from Alfaqueque

MISS EVA LE GALLIENNE has done more than any other one person or group in New York to prove that the theatre can be restored to its once high estate. Consider what she has done. She has built up an able, if not brilliant, repertory company which works in such harmony that every play appearing on the stage of the Fourteenth Street theatre breathes an atmosphere of lighthearted devotion to work. She has shown a real universality of taste in selecting, for her repertory, plays of the widest emotional and dramatic range. She has revived some of the older classics, introduced many new plays, and kept alive many standard pieces of the theatre. As the resources of her company have developed and as the attendance of the public has justified it, she has modestly stepped aside from many of the leading rôles and thus made her theatre a real place for the development of acting power. And today, in the middle of the most disastrous season of recent years, she has had the perception and the courage to bring to New York the little masterpiece by the brothers Quintero, known as The Lady from Alfaqueque.

To say that this play is like Cradle Song would be very misleading, because the two plays have no outward resemblance whatever. Yet there is actually a very close bond between them, and that bond is a realization on the part of the authors that the simplest of human emotions presented through well-developed characters can furnish quite sufficient material for the theatre without indulgence in any of the violent outbursts so popular among modern writers. The Lady from Alfaqueque has the merest thread of a story. In describing it, all you can say is that a very delightful middle-aged lady from the Andalusian town of Alfaqueque has married and settled down in Madrid, and that as the years have gone by, her devotion to her native town has so increased that anyone claiming parentage or early residence in Alfaqueque can impose upon her to the last limit. The daughter of some distant relative needs a job. Fernandita takes her in as a housemaid, even though she breaks all her dishes. The daughter of a dear friend wants to escape an unfortunate marriage in Alfaqueque. Fernandita promptly takes the young girl to live with her in Madrid. A useless lump of humanity with no ability in any line whatever comes to Madrid seeking a job. Fernandita persuades her husband to give him a job, and is firmly convinced that he must be a fine, worthwhile young man because he comes from Alfaqueque. Fernandita practically supports a gossipy old widow because the woman originally came from Alfaqueque and can make the honey cakes for which that town is famous. Last and not least she gives refuge to a vagabond

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poet who pretends that he is fleeing from some secret persecution, simply because she knows who his parents were in Alfaqueque.

The innocent complications in Fernandita's household resulting from the presence of this vagabond form the entire plot substance of this little play. Even after Fernandita discovers that he is a thoroughgoing imposter, he quite wins back her heart by reading her a poem he has composed dedicated to the beauties of Alfaqueque. In reality, then, the play is nothing but an amusing development of the theme of gentle homesickness. But I submit that, in holding simply and naturally to this one theme, the play touches a broad humanity just as surely as Cradle Song touched the maternal impulse of every woman who saw it.

In a play of this sort, the production quality is everything. And it is just here that the growing resources of Miss Le Gallienne's company are in full evidence. The players enjoy themselves. They enter full-heartedly into the whimsicality of their parts and the play emerges as a tender, subtle and wholly delightful treatment of an enduring and lovely theme. The whole cast really deserves individual mention, but it is certainly Alma Kruger's richly understanding performance of Fernandita which gives the key and tone to the evening. It would be hard to find a play which one could recommend more unqualifiedly to those in search of the simpler pleasures of the theatre at its best. (At the Civic Repertory Theatre.)

On the High Road

THIS is not to be confused with the Lonsdale play recently on Broadway. It is a one-act play by Chekhov and is included on the same bill at Miss Le Gallienne's theatre with The Lady from Alfaqueque. In substance it is merely a picture of a tatterdemalion crowd of humanity gathered in a shabby inn in one of the southern provinces of Russia during a thunder storm. Among the group is a drunken wreck. We learn in time that he was once a wealthy land-owner, but that he has lost his fortune and his character through the treachery of his wife. There is a flaming moment at the end when a carriage stops by the inn and the lady who comes in for a moment's shelter against the storm turns out to be his wife. There is the rage of the peasants against her, and her terror-stricken escape. Then everything subsides and the curtain falls on the heartbroken sobs of the husband. The episode achieves a certain power through the strong characterization of the different human wrecks gathered in the inn. Beyond that, it merely reflects the pessimism and the deep pity for suffering humanity which Chekhov put into so much of his work. Miss Le Gallienne's production of it is notable through the atmosphere it creates and sustains, and through the excellent acting of Robert Ross and Alla Nazimova.

In this, as in all her recent productions, Miss Le Gallienne has demonstrated that simplicity and sincerity are the qualities of supreme importance in creating the true mood of the theatre. These qualities instinctively draw the type of audience into a house that promptly becomes an important part of the theatre itself. The old Fourteenth Street theatre is in many ways a shabby affair, and rather barn-like, yet it has managed to create more of the real magic of the theatre as a place for entertainment through illusion than most of the gaudy uptown playhouses put together. If there ever is a real renaissance of the theatre in this city, it will come through the simple, abiding principles which Miss Le Gallienne has applied to her work in the last year. (At the Civic Repertory Theatre.)

BOOKS

New Emotions for Old

Emotion as a Basis of Civilization, by J. H. Denison. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $5.00.

IF THE reviewer has succeeded in grasping the main thesis of this book, it is the author's purpose to show that, since civilization cannot begin or develop without the recognition of some principle of unity in a group, and since, further, the bare idea of unity would hardly have force as a motive, the possibility of developing and continuing a civilization will depend on cultivating the emotions appropriate to any form which civilization may assume. This is, perhaps, not to say that emotion is the basis of civilization, but rather that the emotional force with which any principle of unity is grasped conditions the possibility of a civilization that can be built thereon.

Whether this is as original a standpoint for the criticism of civilization as the author is persuaded it is, and not rather a return to what was implicit in history writing before the economic interpretation of history became the vogue, this book is still doing a service in putting emphasis on the importance of emotion in building up the forms of human society. It is timely, too, for the author to urge that the cultivation of the right emotions toward the form of social organization under which we live is vital for the continuation of that form. Civilization cannot go on if the ideals for which it stands have no meaning for those who live under it and stir up no emotion in them. Law cannot hold men together in civilized society unless there is a feeling of reverence for the authority of the law, or unless some equally effective substitute for this feeling of reverence can be found.

Mr. Denison expresses the opinion here that the feeling of reverence for authority is an inappropriate emotion in what he calls a "fratriarchal" form of organization, such as a democracy. What he offers in its place, however, appears very inadequate to stir up the depth of emotion that would seem to be needed to keep the elements of a "fratriarchal" group cohering when the force of reverence for authority is withdrawn. It may be suggested that his mistake comes in identifying reverence for authority with a patriarchal form, and in not admitting that, though authority resides in the people, it may still come from God. It may be true that the people as a repository of power will not be as awe-inspiring as the monarch hedged round with divinity. But that would seem to be all the more reason why, in a democracy, the ultimate provenance of authority from God needs to be emphasized.

The book is made up for the most part of illustrative material intended to show how the success of any form of civilization depends on the cultivation of the appropriate kind of emotion. In the details of illustration we find very numerous instances in which we are compelled to disagree with the interpretation of facts. Especially is this the case wherever the author deals with what, after the manner of a British Protestant, he calls the Roman Church. One cannot help wondering what, after all, is the value of attempts at explanation and clarification of ideas when one reads, in a book of such pretensions to scholarship as Emotion as a Basis of Civilization, the statement regarding the Catholic Church, that "it seeks to make all men subject to the authority of Rome rather than to that of their own governments."

JOHN F. MCCORMICK.

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Nor' Nor'east

Labrador Looks at the Orient: Notes of Travel in the Near and the Far East, by Sir Wilfred Thomason Grenfell. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.00.

A HIGHLY useful person in the midst of a well-earned and well-planned holiday is always a heartening sight, and it is chiefly for this personal reason that the account of Dr. Grenfell's twelve-month tour makes such pleasant reading. For his itinerary was the usual, if always thrilling, "round the world cruise"—Egypt, Palestine, India, China, Japan, Korea, et cetera—and his impressions are frankly impressionistic. Indeed, the book is aptly named, since however far afield Sir Wilfred Grenfell wandered, he quite obviously took Labrador and the Union Jack and a thorough-going admiration for the workings of "impartial and impeccable British justice" in the Orient along with him; in one instance carrying his special pleading to the extreme of seriously comparing the opium traffic of China with the liquor traffic of the United States.

Even more naïve and certainly more popular are some of Dr. Grenfell's theological observations—as when he remarks that Christ was "neither a Modernist nor a Fundamentalist." And however disenchanting modern Jerusalem, with its factions and its fictions, may be, it is hard to escape the conviction that a wider knowledge and a deeper insight would restore the enchantment of those immemorially "Holy Places." But if the Arctic paladin seems invincibly impatient with such ancient devotions as the Stations of the Cross, he remains firmly convinced of the Resurrection—and optimistically determined to discover the best in each country and its people. The chapters on Egypt, with which country his family has long had more or less intimate relations, are the best in the book; and the photographs have a clarity and dependability not always achieved by the text. Altogether, one puts aside the volume with a feeling of friendship for the genial personality of its author and a wholesome nostalgia for the countries of his sojourn, but just a little teased by superficialities which suggest the unedited notes of a hasty tourist. Apropos: is not the "Father Jongues" to whose crucifixion in Canada Dr. Grenfell reverently refers, the heroic Father Jogues whose decapitation by the Indians in 1646 is likely to give New York state its first officially canonized martyr and saint?

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

Time Was!

John Cameron's Odyssey, transcribed by Andrew Farrell. New York: The Macmillan Company. $4.50.

THIS book is the compleat mariner. The sea is in its pages. It convinces you that the man who wrote it was made by the Age of Sail, which he typifies. His habits of thought reveal the work he did, the friends he made, the stories he heard, the books he read, the fun he had, the privations he suffered. His manner of speaking is in character: frequent allusions to anecdotes famous forty years ago and well known still, metaphors made up of the sea's terminology, vigorous and salty yet with a bookish tone to be expected in a man of no writing experience who had read widely, a ship's captain who had known Stevenson's romances long before he met their author.

This is John Cameron at seventy-two, telling the story of his life at sea. At seventeen he signed on with the bark Ida, and the day she was to sail saw a crew mad with drink riot and fight and refuse duty. This was a beginning! At forty-seven he brought a nineteen-ton cutter through a typhoon which wrecked 1,500 vessels, safely to her berth in Vladivostok. The officers of the Russian fleet, from the admiral down, toasted John Cameron. But "my thirty years at sea were done."

If John Cameron had not written his own Odyssey, someone else would have. His name was too well known in the southern Pacific to have been forgotten entirely. Here, among many things good to have is his version of the mysterious voyage of the Wandering Minstrel, that famous affair which Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne used as the kernel of The Wrecker. Here are recollections of the last days of the island monarchies, fine new yarns about the court of King Kalakaua, the story of Princess Ruth who stopped a flow of lava, and accounts of political skirmishes trivial in themselves but written with a fine eye to what was going on in distant capitals, which show us what the well-informed trader thought of the international grabbing being done under his nose.

Through it all is the slight touch of sadness. He describes a frolic, and adds that it was the last time he was to see this good comrade or that. From a profitable or a harrowing voyage he does not turn without a word of regret for the men who stood by his side. "I saw the end of the Age of Sail. I witnessed the passing of something fuller of pathos—the little brown kingdoms of the Pacific." Or "We bade farewell to Midway, the last good-by that ever I shall say to that island." He is an ancient full of dreams, a man of many memories regaling his old age.

VINCENT ENGELS.

Fingers on the Trigger

When West Was West, by Owen Wister. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

Shadow of the Long Knives, by Thomas Boyd. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

WHEN Owen Wister, fresh from Harvard, first journeyed to the far western plains in 1884, he observed with a detached discernment that deepened into canny insight with his many subsequent visits. The Virginian, written in 1902, was more than a best seller of its day; and by comparison with the distorted western claptrap that has succeeded it in the pulp serial magazines and among news-stand novels, it almost deserves some of the reverence due a classic. A good deal of water has passed under the bridge since The Virginian, but even as an old man Owen Wister still produces the best of the western stories intended for popular reading. The rollicking, mock-heroic, sentimental, tragic West that Wister knew has been succeeded by a scene prominent with granaries, fruit ranches, and tourists—but not for Wister, and not for the reader who falls into Wister's mood. The present volume of short stories is a slyly told, romantic hodgepodge of the old days, in truth; and it is marred by a superficial flair for Hard Men with Hearts of Gold, exaggerations in situation, and sundry tricks of style. There is now and then the ring of something close to literature withal: in the story of Captain Quid, whose demure little wife practically spent her life trying to hound tobacco out of his life, for example; and in the lamplit gathering of fading old-timers who chant their broken-hearted swan song through At the Sign of the Last Chance, the concluding story of the book. Indeed the spirit of Remington's West has not yet passed away.

Thomas Boyd, author of The Shadow of the Long Knives,

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made a name for himself after he came from the marine corps with his story Through the Wheat, one of the most faithful and objective of the doughboy novels. His later books have not come from the same emotional depths. Here he has gone back to colonial days and selected as his central figure one Angus McDermott, emissary of the British among the Indians of the Ohio country. McDermott, taciturn, loyal and efficient scout, marries a girl from "North Kerliny" whose family was killed in an Indian reprisal. Charity makes a taciturn, loyal and efficient wife. They raise a taciturn, etc., boy. They speak the Kerliny dialect with consciously picturesque effect—when they speak at all. Possibly frontier scouts and their families were really as uninteresting and colorless as Mr. Boyd's characters—or possibly the characteristics of Cooper's lack-luster Leatherstocking, have only settled on all children of the woods as a vitiating tradition. Whatever the cause, the family group in this novel is as wooden as the Indians and soldiers and battles around it are pulsating and vivid. Mr. Boyd's sympathetic interpretation of Indian life and customs, and his understanding of the mortal problem that faced them when the whites took their land and consistently broke pledges of faith in doing so, is laudable. So, too, is his handling of mass action at the climax of the book, the successful advance against the British and Indians north of Fort Defiance, directed by Mad Anthony Wayne. The author handles the intricate action of battle with masterly clarity. His style is compressed, meaty, sober. But his central figures come to life only sporadically, and it is regrettable that the apparent authenticity of the backwoods scene he depicts should be flawed by occasional surprising faux pas, like his allusion to a female deer's "antlers."

HARRY MCGUIRE.

George Jolly and Others

The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage, by Leslie Hotson. Cambridge: The Harvard University Press. $5.00.

HOW actors and dramatists got on during the troubled eras of Cromwellian and Stuart rule in England has remained a problem with reference to which imagination tried to make patterns out of meagre shreds of fact. During recent explorations in the Public Records Office, Dr. Hotson unearthed a quantity of information which, when added to the findings of other workers, considerably alters the picture. His present, rather massive volume is intended for the specialist, but is sure to leave its mark upon all more popular discussions of post-Elizabethan drama.

Here may be found a full and very interesting account of the relations between players and Parliament, showing that the Puritans never succeeded in padlocking all the theatres and show-houses; some helpful remarks on the architecture and appointments of the Red Bull and other playhouses, in which a number of conventional views are challenged; and two well-documented chapters dealing with Davenant and George Jolly, both of whom intrigue the student of English drama. The rest of the book is filled with back-stage talk regarding the various Restoration companies. One misses in them a something that may, perhaps, be defined as perspective. The author wades through a mass of unassimilable detail without, apparently, keeping his eye on the compass. But he does provide the student with richer fare than can be had anywhere else on the same subject, and so deserves a hearty salute as a man with a new and better map of a hitherto uncharted world.

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Briefer Mention

American Ghost Stories, selected by C. Armitage Harper. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

THIS well-chosen collection of tales about ha'nts and sich-like is admirable in the variety of tastes that it will satisfy. For those who like their spirits urbane and humorous, it is doubtful if four better stories could be found than Brander Matthews's tale of The Rival Ghosts; John Kendrick Bangs's The Water Ghost of Harrowby Hall; Ellis Parker Butler's yarn of the "li'l' black boy whut he name was Mose" who discovered to his horror that "dey ain't no ghosts"; and Mark Twain's droll story of the sad old ghost of the Cardiff Giant, who, it turned out, wasn't haunting himself at all, but a plaster cast of himself—surely a most melancholy and disillusioning situation. Of the stories in the more conventional tradition of horror, Poe's Ligeia, F. Marion Crawford's The Upper Berth, and Wilbur Daniel Steele's The Woman at Seven Brothers, leave the most permanent impress. Theodore Dreiser is included with a thriller, The Hand, but it is sloppily written and effective largely because of ponderous repetition. The intrinsically psychological type of story is represented by Edith Wharton's provocative study, The Eyes—probably the most finely written tale in the collection.

The Marvelous Miniature Library. New York: Miniature Dictionary Publishers. $.75 each.

MANY a literate modern Mulvaney would have jumped to attention at sight of the Marvelous Miniature Library. Here is a neat leather folder containing six volumes—Shakespeare, Paradise Lost, The Arabian Nights, Don Quixote, The Golden Treasury and Webster unabridged. The whole is about the size of those safety-razor packs which the United States Army commissary used to hand out so obligingly. That does not leave much room for the books, which are nevertheless quite readable owing to an inventive and canny typesetter. There are nearly eight hundred pages of Don Quixote, and you can absorb every one without ocular disaster. The same publishers also issue a Bible, set in diminutive type, which must be perused with a reading glass. Though not, we hasten to add, a Douay version, it is an interesting scriptural publication. The books are printed in France and Germany, and should prove most useful to Americans desirous of tucking good literature in a small space.

Zofloya or the Moor, by Charlotte Dacre. London: The Fortune Press.

THE "haunted castle" romances, read so avidly by the late eighteenth century, are as rare as ghosts these days. So at least declares the Reverend Montague Summers, who has been trailing such items for years and whose knowledge of the field is remarkable. His introduction to the present attractive reprint of an old thriller which moved the young Shelley to write, compresses a wealth of information into a few colorful pages. Little as good as this has been written about the movement inaugurated by The Castle of Otranto. As for Mrs. Dacre's romance, it is really not bad at all. Every fault of sentimentalism and outrageously wild fancy protested against by Jane Austen can be found in it, and yet the thing is really a story with clashes and climaxes that (though they seem amusing to a modern reader) do hold the interest. The book is rare and the present edition will tempt the curious.

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The Devil's Shadow, by Frank Thiess. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

THE characters whom Frank Thiess presented as adolescents in The Gateway to Life appear as young men in the present, less satisfactory sequel. Germany is tottering on the brink of financial and moral ruin. Nothing in the universe seems permanent, every motive humanity manifests is base. Caspar Müller goes out into this new, raw weather, an uncompromising egoist. There are many like him, and the stories of all coalesce into a feverish search for pleasure and fleshly gain. It is an appalling picture and, one cannot but feel, a false interpretation of the modern scene. One is forced to admit, however, that the Thiess method is extraordinarily skilful. After the fashion of a musical composer, he strikes an emotional theme which is carried through various andantes and largos with an indescribably delicate harmoniousness. Each variation adds to the development of the whole; the interpretative chords are full and melodious, and the finale is a staggering addition of effects. The artificiality of the conception detracts, however, from the book to an extent which reminds one of Restoration drama.

The Voyage of Captain Thomas James, by R. B. Bodilly, R.N., New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

IN ALL the history of the world there can be but few records of such suffering as was endured by Captain James and the small crew that set out with him to find the Northwest Passage in 1631. Caught by an early and severe winter in the southern end of Hudson Bay, they lived for nine months in the flimsiest shelter, assailed by hunger, disease and the intense cold. Commander Bodilly has done a splendid job in selecting and arranging typical passages from the log of the voyage. It is clear from the nature of these selections that his chief interest is not in the accomplishment, but in the explorers themselves: various figures, notably the surgeon and the carpenter, being unforgettable. His own comments are inserted to make clear to the reader of today how difficult and dangerous were the various expedients tried by Captain James, but they are highly justified in another way as showing the advances made by navigation in the past three hundred years. This is a book not to be overlooked by anyone who is interested in the history, and the spirit, of the early seventeenth century.

Humanism and Christianity, by Francis J. McConnell. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

BISHOP McCONNELL'S book is not one that the usual run of Catholics will read, though the professional student will find it interesting to know what is written by a man of Bishop McConnell's eminent position in the Methodist world. But every Catholic will respond to the generous praise he gives the Catholic system of worship. "Rome does keep the glorified Redeemer," he says, "at the focus of the worshiper's vision. 'Knees on the floor, eyes on the altar, heart in heaven.' This is positively thrilling to any devout soul, whether he believes in a miraculous sacrament or not." And the bishop's suspicion of the advisability of trying to secure religious ends by the Church entering politics is particularly significant. "The weapons of the world can seldom be used effectively except in the world's spirit, and that spirit at least points away from all ideals which can be characterized by the name of Christ."

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Aphra Behn, by V. Sackville-West. New York: The Viking Press. $2.00.

THOUGH she has long lain at rest under her black slab in Westminster Abbey, though her works and the style of literature in her plays and poems have long since become démodé, the name of Aphra Behn, the first woman in English letters to assume the rôle of professional author, refuses to die down, and persists in the memory of readers and students. Scarcely an edifying character to form the pioneer for our schools of women writers—immoral in private life, her name almost a social by-word in the bohemia which she may be said to have inspired in her rôle of Astrea and patroness of the young writers of her day, there was yet in her character an elemental honesty, a human quality at times noble enough, and a sentiment for the degradations and sufferings of her fellow-beings that have kept her name in the annals of criticism. She met not only the social prejudices against a woman of uncertain parentage and a questionable youth, but the dogged distrust of a woman's mentality and capacity for a literary career. That her plays, decked out in the romantic borrowings from Spain and France, gained a sort of success in times of debased taste, and that her novel, Oroonoko, left an English model for our present-day disciples of South Sea orgies, remain the striking features in a career that might place her in the company of George Sand, and will continue to keep her picturesque signature in the perverse minds of what we call the general readers.

Blake's Innocence and Experience, by Joseph H. Wicksteed. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $8.00.

THAT Blake was a genius has, of course, helped to keep his name alive during years when the world was so many more thousand times positive than he would have wished it to be. But that he was a mystic is the reason why modern English readers, Max Plowman and the rest, have worked themselves so far into his secret territory. Mr. Wicksteed's edition of the favorite poems adds a valuable, unusually credible analysis of the lyric Blake to extant critical literature. The heart of the book is reproduction of the manuscript with comment. Several lengthy introductions are, however, particularly acceptable because of the novel but convincing points of view they advance. Never dogmatic, Mr. Wicksteed is content to leave the impression that he has studied diligently and with insight. The volume is most attractively printed and illustrated, the color reprints being particularly fine. It should be added to the libraries of all who care for Blake, or whose business it is to interpret English literature.

The Wanderer, by Alain-Fournier, translated from the French by François DeLisle. New York: Houghton-Mifflin Company. $2.50.

THE WANDERER is a romance of rural France, and it is a portrait of the mood in which man quests for beauty. It has the atmosphere of a dream, the virtue of a gentle humor, the quality of pathos. With all this, it is a story—and except for the absence of anything loud or coarse, one would be tempted to say "a yarn." Perhaps this is the perfection of Alain-Fournier's book, that, dealing with things so insubstantial as fantasy and mood, it succeeds in telling a most unforgettable story. Not for nothing had this young man of the Sologne read and been fascinated by Robinson Crusoe and Treasure Island.

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Carlyle at His Zenith (1848-1853), by David Alec Wilson. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $5.00.

WITH this volume, Mr. Wilson presents number four of his projected six-tome account of Carlyle seen intimately, in Boswellian perspective as it were. The extraordinary interest of his achievement is due to the great deal of the subject we are permitted to see without any interference on the part of the biographer. Too many "life" writers are like annoying guides to picture galleries, forever insistent upon keeping you from seeing the canvas at anything excepting their distance, through anything excepting their eyes. Mr. Wilson crowds into this book a goodly amount of gossip and travel, of great literary faces viewed close up, but of Carlyle abundance preëminently. Nowadays it is almost better to approach the Scottish seer (that is, unless one wants the rumble of those magnificent torrential sentences) through the Wilson medium than through the original. One must add that the present volume, like its precursors, is full of the most picturesque kind of bigotry. Sartor Resartus himself was no slouch, as the phrase goes, in the work of appending anathemas to points of view dissented from. Mr. Wilson heightens this quality, serving up chunks of a variety of anti-Romanism one believed had been laughed out of existence ages ago.

The Confessions of a Puzzled Parson, by Charles Fiske. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.00.

THE title of this book might, rather unfortunately, suggest the religious experiences of some minister who was drifting away from orthodoxy. But the "confessions" are really the reflections of a sane and clear thinker on certain present-day problems that concern the church. The topics range through a discussion of the professional uplifter, the church and politics, the social side of religion, church unity and modern marriage. Every subject is touched with a kindly humor that precludes dulness. And Bishop Fiske writes with a genial persuasiveness that is indeed rare. Much of the smart writing of today merely makes the reader think how he can answer it. But Bishop Fiske has the gift of making one who starts in disagreement wonder if perhaps the Bishop may not be right in questioning the results of much professional social work, the political activities of ministers, and many other points he discusses. Anyone looking for a present for an Episcopalian friend need search no farther.

The Student Abroad, by John W. Brennan, C.SS.R. Boston: The Stratford Company. $5.00.

THE journey described in this book was an extensive one, embracing, besides much of Italy, Greece, Constantinople, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Father Brennan was anything but a perfunctory tourist. Obviously he was always on the alert. He saw everything, and recorded with zealous and unflagging diligence everything that he saw. As might be expected, the emphasis is constantly on religious conditions and institutions. The descriptions of Rome in the Jubilee Year, including the missionary exhibition and the opening of the Holy Door, are among many interesting passages. The papers from which the book was compiled might have been somewhat abridged, however, before their appearance in book form. A more concentrated volume would have been cheaper, handier and probably no less interesting. Nor do most of the photographic illustrations, being of the stock sort, add anything genuine to the value of the text.

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AND COMMERCIAL PRINTING

The Road to Cathay, by Merriam Sherwood and Elmer Mantz. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

IT IS sad that the sensitive souls of our authors should shudder at the ubiquity of fermented mare's milk, in the middle centuries, along the road to Cathay. "It is in vain," they admit, "that Friar William tells us it was savory, that other travelers describe it as resembling a fine white wine." Surely we cannot stand by while the veracity of Friar William is thus discounted and his taste maligned. We must strike down this heresy as it deserves. Once this is done, we may concede that the book is admirably planned as a correlation and comparison of excerpts from the chronicles of Friar John of Plano Carpini, Friar Odoric the Bohemian, William of Rubruquis, Ibn Batuta the Moor and Marco Polo, describing the land route from Europe to the courts of the great Khans. And, except in the few places where the authors become squeamish over the habits of the people encountered by the travelers, the execution is excellent: light, but not flippant, rapid and dramatic.

The Collected Satires of Lord Alfred Douglas. London: The Fortune Press.

TO NOT a few people, Lord Alfred Douglas seems one of the most interesting among modern English lyric poets. His sonnets have both inner and outward distinction, and none of his work lapses into informality. The satires gathered in the present volume are somewhat too personal and trivial in object to be truly effective, but there are passages which call to mind the great Elizabethan and Augustan satirists. Lord Douglas manifests, here at least, a virtue now grown very rare—the courage to be savage not toward a dead worthy unable to strike back, but toward prominent swaggerers who own all kinds of weapons.

John Smith—Also Pocahontas, by John Gould Fletcher. New York: Brentano's. $3.50.

MR. FLETCHER is not overly kind to Captain John Smith. His subject is the very man held in such awe by schoolboys, but his characterization of that man is one in which no boy could recognize his hero. And yet Mr. Fletcher has nothing of the swagger, the snarl and the sneer of the professional debunker. His documents are presented and his comments offered quietly, and if the reader draws the conclusion that this Elizabethan soldier of fortune was not the man he pretended to be, that is not Mr. Fletcher's fault but the reader's, and, possibly—Captain John Smith's.

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